



BRISBANE GIRLS GRAMMAR SCHOOL

ANNUAL REVIEW 2023



BRISBANE GIRLS GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Nil sine labore LIVES ENRICHED BY LEARNING



In the spirit of reconciliation, Brisbane Girls Grammar School acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands on which our campuses stand, the Turrbal, Jagera and Kabi Kabi Peoples, and all Indigenous people in our School community. We honour and respect their Elders past, present and emerging, and recognise that these lands have always been places of teaching and learning. We are grateful for thousands of generations of care for Country and seek to walk in solidarity with the First Peoples of our nation for reconciliation, justice and healing.

Image: Brisbane Girls Grammar School 1943



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FROM THE CHAIR



MS JULIE MCKAY (2000)
CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Each year, Brisbane Girls Grammar School takes steps that shape its legacy as one of Australia's leading schools and in 2023, the School advised our community of the historic decision to introduce Years 5 and 6 in 2026.

This broadening of the School's educational offering represents a significant shift: as an established leader in the education of adolescent girls, an expansion to also focus on the unique needs of upper primary students was considered thoughtfully. In consultation with our community, the Board of Trustees and leadership of the School explored how a Girls Grammar education could be adapted and reimaged for a younger cohort to deliver a rigorous, creative and inspiring education that is of a standard equal to, but distinct from, the secondary educational offering for which our School is renowned. We reviewed the nature of every element of that education from our curriculum and co-curriculum to student care, and beyond, including the shape of our relationships with families. The result of this effort is, ultimately, exciting: it represents a tangible commitment to the pursuit of gender equality in providing greater opportunities for girls, and a great optimism for our collective future. We are looking forward to sharing the experience of a Girls Grammar education with a younger intake of students and broadening the School's educational offering to reflect the contemporary expectations of many of our families and prospective parents.

While preparing for this future development, the School celebrated many other occasions, events and milestones that drew our attention back to the present. Academically, our students exemplified the School motto, *Nil Sine Labore*, and our expert, generous teachers encouraged every girl to strive to do their best. Consequently, our Australian National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) and the

Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) results were outstanding. These outcomes are not our goal; they are, however, the well-deserved reward for our students' curiosity, effort and enthusiasm in their learning.

Our students, staff, alumnae and families also continued to astound with the breadth of co-curricular and Service-based activities that they engaged in with energy and mastery.

In everything we did, the School aligned with the principles of the Strategic Design 2023-2025. In National Reconciliation Week, we launched our Reconciliation Action Plan—a formalisation of the School's commitment to reconciliation. A living document, it provides a framework for BGGS to foster more meaningful and reciprocal relationships with First Nations Peoples, promote cultural awareness, and embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures across our curriculum and daily school life.

I wish to acknowledge Principal, Ms Jacinda Euler Welsh, for her deserved receipt of the Australian Council for Educational Leaders' (Queensland) highest award, the Miller-Grassie Award for Outstanding Educational Leadership 2023, and a further national Leadership Award that recognises her as one of Australia's most impactful and influential educational leaders. The Board of Trustees is thankful for her strong leadership. I thank my fellow Trustees for their dedication, expertise and stewardship of our School.

FROM THE PRINCIPAL



MS JACINDA EULER WELSH
PRINCIPAL

Throughout 2023, Brisbane Girls Grammar School has honoured the School's aspiration: to enrich the lives of our students through learning, inspiring them to go on to enrich the lives of others.

This aim goes beyond the delivery of academic content and development of skills, to encouraging students to be inquisitive and adventurous, always open to learning from, and through, all of life's experiences. It is this purpose that drives the unrelenting passion of our teachers and professional staff, and unites our community of families, alumnae and supporters.

While our NAPLAN and ATAR results were again exceptional in 2023, these outcomes are only one important aspect of the much richer, more nuanced discovery through learning that our students undertake while at our School. In each Faculty, students are encouraged to engage beyond the curriculum, and follow their curiosity as far as possible.

In Service, our students had direct input into the launch of our Reconciliation Action Plan—an initiative that will continue to ensure reconciliation is embodied and pursued in the classroom and throughout the School. Clubs and Activities nurtured the interests of our students and resulted in well-deserved rewards, including a championship for our Mooting team, and medals aplenty at Science and Maths competitions. Our Gala Concert allowed girls' musical talents to shine and were shaped by inspirational contributors—Australia's leading didgeridoo player, composer and 2023 Queensland Australian of the Year, William Barton, who performed with the girls, and internationally renowned composer, Brian Balmages, who prepared them for the concert. And the compositions of inspiring women musicians at our International Women's Day Concert, performed by our musicians, were a point

of particular pride. Our sporting teams celebrated significant milestones and successes, including 50 years of Water Polo at BGGS.

During Term 2, I visited schools and universities across Europe and the UK and attended a fabulous reunion of Grammar Women in London. The connections between BGGS and global institutions remind us that while the world is vast, so are the experiences of our Grammar community. Our alumnae engaged with the School in so many diverse ways including through mentoring, coaching, and events, and the School hosted a record number of reunions after the pandemic delayed some celebrations. We know a shared Girls Grammar experience creates bonds that last decades, and these events allowed many in our community to sustain their connection to each other and the School.

With 2023 behind us, we look forward, knowing that the next few years hold significant milestones for the School. In 2024, we will celebrate 125 Years of the Old Girls Association, one of the oldest associations of its kind in Australia. We also move closer to the School's sesquicentenary, and planning and preparations are in full swing to mark 150 years of Brisbane Girls Grammar School in 2025. We look forward to an important evolution in the history of our School, when we welcome students and families to Years 5 and 6 in 2026.

Each of us adds our own strength, talent and unique energy to Brisbane Girls Grammar School, and I thank our staff, students, families, and alumnae for their continued belief in empowering girls and young women through a broad, liberal education that has stood the test of time.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BRISBANE GIRLS GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Brisbane Girls Grammar School's Board of Trustees each bring extensive experience, knowledge and skills to their role of guiding the School to ensure the continued delivery of the broad, liberal education for which Girls Grammar is renowned.



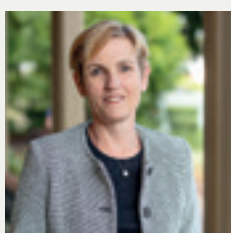
MS JULIE McKAY (2000)

BA, BBusMan, Fellow in Ethical Leadership, EMBA, MPP
Trustee since 2016

Ms McKay is considered a leading voice on gender equality in Australia. She is an independent consultant working with both government and private organisations to support leaders to understand the importance of organisational culture and employee engagement for performance. She has previously been a Partner of a global consulting firm, Gender Advisor to the Chief of the Australian Defence Force, and was Executive Director of UN Women Australia for nearly a decade.

Ms McKay was named Young Australian of the Year (ACT) in 2013, and was Chair of Council at the Women's College within the University of Sydney from 2016 to 2019.

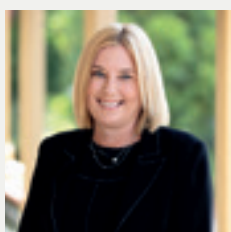
Ms McKay is a past student of the School (2000).



MS KERRY NEWTON

LLB, LLM, MBA, MA, GradDip(Applied Finance and Investment), FAICD, FGIA, FIML
DEPUTY CHAIR
Trustee since 2018

Ms Newton has more than 25 years' experience in legal, management and commercial roles across private and public sectors. She is currently Chief Executive Officer at Directors Australia, a national board consulting and non-executive director recruitment firm. Ms Newton has served on the boards of private, public and not-for-profit companies across aged care, education, childcare, energy, property and housing. Previously a Non-executive Director of Energy Queensland Ltd, Ms Newton is currently a Board Advisor of Norco Co-operative Limited.



MS SOPHIE MOORE (1991)

BBus, CA, FFin
CHAIR OF THE AUDIT, RISK AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE
Trustee since 2019

Ms Moore is Chief Financial Officer at Eagers Automotive Limited. Leading the company's accounting, taxation, payroll, treasury and internal audit functions. Ms Moore is also an Executive Director of Eagers Automotive Limited, which is Australia's oldest and largest listed automotive retail group. With more than 25 years' experience as a Chartered Accountant, Ms Moore has previously held the positions of General Manager (Global Corporate Finance) at Flight Centre and Associate Director (Advisory/Transaction Services) at PwC.

Ms Moore is a past student of the School (1991).



MR BERKELEY COX

B.LLB (Hons)
Trustee since 2023

Berkeley Cox is a Partner at King & Wood Mallesons. He was previously the Australian firm's Chief Executive Partner (2017 to 2022) and has extensive experience in financial services and business, including digital transformation, and performance and development.

Mr Cox has a deep interest in respectfully and actively supporting First Nations communities. He is a member of the First Nations Working Group of ACT for Kids (an Australian charity that provides free therapy and support services to children and families who have experienced, or are at risk of, child abuse and neglect) and served eight years on their Board. He is also a Director of Workplace Giving Australia.

Berkeley is a past parent of the School.



PROFESSOR MAHER GANDHI

MBChB, FRCP, FRCPath, FRACP, PhD
Trustee since 2023

Mahe Gandhi is Executive Director, Mater Research and Director of Mater Research Institute-UQ. He is also a pre-eminent senior staff haematologist with a particular interest in lymphoma and immunotherapy. He was the previous Leukaemia Foundation Chair of Blood Cancer Research.

Professor Gandhi is a member of the Federal Government-appointed National Blood Cancer Task Force steering committee that aims to improve access to blood cancer services across Australia.

He is a prior Chair of the Australasian Leukaemia Lymphoma Group Scientific Sub-Committee and of the Metro South Human Research Ethics Committee.

Professor Gandhi is a past parent of the School.



MR ANDREW KING

Trustee since 2014

Mr King possesses more than 35 years' experience in the Australian corporate property and funds management arena. Over this period of time, Mr King has created countless enduring relationships within the corporate community both locally, nationally and internationally.

Mr King has held various directorships over many years of both not-for-profit and for profit organisations, together with various advisory boards and committees at all levels of government.

Mr King is a past parent of the School.

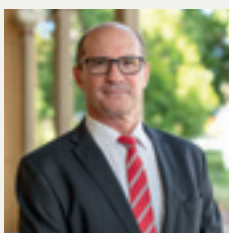


MS DIANA LOHRISCH (1989)

BComm, LLB, FGIA
Trustee since 2019 (and from 2013 to 2016)

Ms Lohrisch has been a corporate and commercial partner at a leading independent law firm for more than 15 years. She has more than two decades of legal experience advising on commercial transactions, capital markets, mergers and acquisitions and corporate governance across multiple market sectors. Ms Lohrisch's clients include start-ups, SMEs, listed companies and well-established businesses and corporate groups.

Ms Lohrisch is a past student of the School (Head Girl 1989).



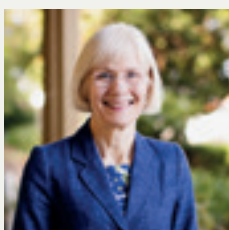
PROFESSOR JAMES NICKLIN

MBBS, FRANZCOG, CGO
Trustee since 2018

Professor Nicklin is the Director of Gynaecologic Oncology at Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital (RBWH) and a Visiting Medical Officer at Wesley Hospital. Professor Nicklin completed his specialty training in obstetrics and gynaecology in Queensland, followed by sub-specialty training in Sydney and the USA.

Professor Nicklin is a Professor of Gynaecologic Oncology at The University of Queensland and has previously served as Chairman of the Australian Society of Gynaecologic Oncologists.

Professor Nicklin is a past parent of the School.



PROFESSOR DEBORAH TERRY AC

BA(Hons), PhD ANU, HonLLD Aberd., FASSA
Trustee since 2023

Deborah Terry is Vice Chancellor and President of The University of Queensland.

Professor Terry is a highly experienced leader in the Australian university sector, and an internationally recognised scholar in psychology. She is a Fellow and past President of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia, and an appointed member of the Australian Research Council Advisory Council. She also currently serves on the Board of the Australia and New Zealand School of Government, and the National Schools Resourcing Board. She is a former Chair of the Board of Universities Australia and a member of the Universitas 21 Executive Committee.





THE SCHOOL

Established in 1875, Brisbane Girls Grammar School is one of Australia's leading girls' schools and one of Queensland's original Grammar schools.

Through diverse opportunities and experiences, Girls Grammar students are encouraged to embrace the unexpected, bravely pursue their dreams, and inspire the creation of a more just world.

IDENTITY AND HISTORY

On 15 March 1875, six years before women were admitted to universities in Sydney and Melbourne, Brisbane Girls Grammar School was established—initially as a branch of Brisbane Grammar School—to provide girls the same educational opportunities as their brothers.

The School opened in a two-storey house, located on George Street, catering for 50 students under the leadership of Lady Principal, Mrs Janet O'Connor. Within six months, the School outgrew these premises, and relocated to Wickham Terrace.

In 1882, the decision was made to separate from Brisbane Grammar School and operate independently under the *Grammar Schools Act*. Two years later, in 1884, the School relocated to its current site on Gregory Terrace.

The original Main Building still stands proudly in Spring Hill, symbolising Girls Grammar's unique heritage, and its unwavering commitment to establishing the educational foundation for girls and young women to contribute confidently to their world with wisdom, imagination and integrity.



HISTORICAL TIMELINE

- 1875—Brisbane Girls Grammar School is established in a two-storey house on George Street.
- 1877—Sir Charles Lilley is appointed Chair of the Board of Trustees; Sarah Cargill is appointed Lady Principal.
- 1878—Mary Mackinlay is appointed Lady Principal.
- 1882—Sophia Beanland is appointed Lady Principal; Girls Grammar separates from Brisbane Grammar School.
- 1884—The School relocates to what remains its current Main Campus on Gregory Terrace.
- 1887—Sir Samuel Walker Griffith is appointed Chair of the Board of Trustees.
- 1889—Charlotte Pells is appointed Lady Principal.
- 1896—Eliza Fewings is appointed Lady Principal.
- 1899—The Old Girls Association is established.
- 1900—Milisent Wilkinson is appointed Lady Principal.
- 1904—Sir Hugh Nelson becomes Chair of the Board of Trustees, succeeded by John Laskey Woolcock in 1906.
- 1913—Mary Atkinson Williams is appointed Headmistress, succeeded by Jane Walker in 1914; the first *School Magazine* is published.
- 1915—Margaret Annie Mackay is appointed Headmistress; the West Wing opens as a single-storey building, housing an art room and three classrooms.
- 1925—Kathleen Lilley is appointed Headmistress; the first School uniform is introduced.
- 1952—Louise Crooks is appointed Headmistress; John England is appointed Chair of the Board of Trustees; the Parents and Friends Association is established.
- 1958—The Kathleen Lilley Library is opened.
- 1964—Year 8 students commence secondary schooling, known as Form II; the House system is introduced.
- 1968—Yvonne Bain becomes the first woman Trustee.
- 1971—Nancy Shaw is appointed Headmistress.
- 1975—The School celebrates its centenary.
- 1976—Dr August Shaw Gerhmann is appointed Chair of the Board of Trustees.
- 1977—Judith Hancock is appointed Principal; the Fathers Group is established.
- 1986—The Gerhmann Theatre is built.
- 1987—Dr McCrae Grassie is appointed Chair of the Board of Trustees; the Marrapatta Memorial Outdoor Education Centre is opened at Imbil.
- 1995—The McCrae Grassie Sports Centre is opened.
- 1996—Dr Cherrell Hirst is appointed Chair of the Board of Trustees.
- 2000—The School song, *Nile Sine Labore*, is introduced.
- 2002—Amanda Bell is appointed Principal; the Boarding House is closed.
- 2007—Elizabeth Jameson is appointed Chair of the Board of Trustees; the Cherrell Hirst Creative Learning Centre is opened.
- 2013—Jacinda Euler is appointed Principal; the School unveils the Rangakarra Recreational and Environmental Education Centre at Fig Tree Pocket.
- 2015—Year 7 is introduced to the School and the Research Learning Centre is opened.
- 2017—The Dorothy Hill Observatory commences operation at the School's Marrapatta campus.
- 2019—Julie McKay is appointed Chair of the Board of Trustees.
- 2020—The Science Learning Centre is opened.
- 2021—The Floreamus Centre, the School's central location for student wellbeing, is opened.
- 2023—The School announced the introduction of Years 5 and 6 from 2026.

HIGHLIGHTS—2023

- The School's 2023 academic results reflect and sustain its reputation as Queensland's leading girls' school.
- Brisbane Girls Grammar School was once again one of the top-performing secondary schools in Queensland for the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR), with a median ATAR result of 96.30.
- One hundred per cent of Year 12 2023 students were ATAR-eligible and more than 99 per cent of students who applied for tertiary study were offered a place.
- The Year 12 2023 cohort exceeded all Queensland state averages in the new ATAR system: 13.48 per cent received 99 and above; 29.57 per cent received 98 and above; 62.17 per cent received 95 and above; 85.22 per cent received 90 and above; and 95.22 per cent received 80 and above.
- The School announced the introduction of Years 5 and 6 to Brisbane Girls Grammar School from 2026. The introduction of Years 5 and 6 represents the evolution of a Girls Grammar education, and reflects the contemporary expectations of many of the School's families and prospective parents.
- The School launched its Reconciliation Action Plan during National Reconciliation Week. This formalisation of the School's commitment to reconciliation is built upon relationships, respect and opportunity, to ensure reconciliation is embodied and pursued in the classroom and throughout the School. It allows progress to be measured against specific goals tailored to our School context and community.
- The current term of the Board of Trustees commenced in March with the appointment of three new Trustees—Berkeley Cox, Professor Maher Gandhi and Professor Deborah Terry AC—with six Trustees continuing (Julie McKay, Kerry Newton, Sophie Moore, Diana Lohrisch, Andrew King and Professor James Nicklin).
- During May, Principal, Ms Jacinda Euler Welsh, visited schools and universities across the UK and Europe, and connected with Girls Grammar alumnae living in these areas. Visits included BGGGS Affiliate Schools in Germany and France—Werner-Heisenberg Gymnasium, and Lycee Saint-Paul—along with tertiary institutions such as University College London and London School of Economics.
- The School's means tested bursary offering continued with five bursaries awarded for students commencing in 2023.
- The newly established Parents & Friends Association Bursary was awarded for the first time to a student commencing Year 7 in 2024.
- The Australian Council for Educational Leaders (Queensland) awarded Principal, Ms Jacinda Euler Welsh, the 2023 Miller-Grassie Award for Outstanding Leadership in Education and a national ACEL Leadership Award for 2023.





PERFORMANCE

Throughout 2023, the School achieved both measurable and intangible successes across academic achievement, co-curricular accomplishments, service, supportive student care, and the responsible management of its resources.

The following reports provide an insight into the performance of the School during 2023.

PERFORMANCE

The School is exceptionally proud of its students' academic achievements and the valuable contributions Girls Grammar alumnae go on to make in their lives beyond School.

In 2023, the School's dedicated, caring, and expert staff once again supported students to maximise their individual learning potential. The School's students continued to receive strong results in the National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), and in the system of senior assessment, the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

Girls Grammar is academically non-selective in its main year of entry (Year 7), with places offered in strict date order of application. The School offers no scholarships and is one of the few schools in Queensland whose entire Year 12 cohort is ATAR-eligible.

2023 TERTIARY OFFERS

OFFERS	PER CENT OF GIRLS GRAMMAR COHORT
Tertiary Places Offered	99.6%
Bachelor Degree	99.6%

YEAR 12 2023 AUSTRALIAN TERTIARY ADMISSION RANK RESULTS

The 2023 Year 12 cohort attained outstanding results in the ATAR system. These results continued the School's history of strong performance in the previous Overall Position (OP) system.

ATAR RANGE	PER CENT OF GIRLS GRAMMAR COHORT*
99 and above	13.48%
98 and above	29.57%
95 and above	62.17%
90 and above	85.22%
80 and above	95.22%
Median	96.3%

*100% of all students completing Year 12 studies in 2023 were ATAR-eligible. The reported outcomes are based on the ATAR values disclosed to the School, which represents 97.05% of this cohort.



Queensland Girls Secondary Schools Sports Association (QGSSSA) Premierships 2023

SPORT	TEAMS
Artistic Gymnastics	B Grade
Australian Football (Trial Sport)	Open
Badminton	Open, Senior A, Senior B, Senior D, 7A, 7B
Basketball	7B
Cricket	1 st XI Open, Div 1
Cross Country	16 Years
Hockey	Senior A
Netball	Senior C, 9B, 9C, 8C, 7B, 7C
Rhythmic Gymnastics	A Grade, Year 7 (ii), Year 8 (i), Freehand Open (i)
Softball	Senior A, Senior A2 Junior Softball not held in 2023
Tennis	Senior A
Touch	Senior B, 8B
Volleyball	Senior A (=first), 10B, 8B (=first), 7B

HIGHLIGHTS

Sport

- Athletics—Amaka Ekeocha (12W) competed in the Queensland School Sport Championships, winning a Gold Medal in the Women's 17 Years 100 m Hurdles.
- Athletics—Four students made the Queensland Team for the Australian Junior track and Field Championships (Brisbane): Amaka Ekeocha (12W); Luxe Godfrey-Asseraf (11M); Sophie Hunt (10O) and Zoe McElwaine (10G). Zoe received a Bronze Medal in U16 Women's 3000 m.
- Basketball—Pearle Preston (7R) was selected to the Queensland 12 Years team for the School Sport Australia Basketball Championships.
- Cross Country—Ella Coltzau (12R) and Zoe McElwaine (10G) were selected to the Queensland Team for the National Cross Country Championships (Canberra).
- Golf—Lizzy Harmon (9L) was the winner of the Queensland Golf State Foursome, and was selected in Golf Australia's Junior State Squad for Queensland.
- Gymnastics—Lara Telecican (11W) was the winner of the Individual Trampoline (Lev – Nat 6 TRP Female) at the Australian Gymnastics Championships.
- Hockey—Ashley Foster-McGinn (11B) was selected as a Student Official (Umpire) for the School Sport Australia Under 16 Girls Hockey National Championships.
- Hockey—Carissa Graham (9W) was a member of the Australian champion Queensland Under 15 Hockey and Indoor Hockey teams.
- Rhythmic Gymnastics—Klara Coburn (8G) and Mia Swift (7W) were Australian Representatives at the Junior World Rhythmic Gymnastics (Team Event) held in Romania.
- Rowing—Astrid Thomas (11H) achieved a number of Gold Medals at the Queensland Rowing State Championships: Gold Medal; women's U17 Double Scull; Gold Medal; women's Under 17 Four (Coxed); Gold medal; women's Under 17 Quad Scull (Coxed); and Gold Medal; women's Under 17 Single Scull. Astrid then received a Silver Medal in Women's Under 17 Double Scull at the Australian Rowing Championships (Perth).
- Rowing—At the Queensland Rowing State Championships, the School's team achieved a Silver Medal in the Women's Under 19 Eight (Coxed): Georgia Mackay (11E), Sophie Crane (11G), Astrid Coates (11L), Ella Valery (12E), Harper Hammer (12M), Chloe Chambers (12L), Georgia Petersen (12E), Charlotte Zentveld (11B) and the cox was Izzy Skarott (12L).
- Softball—Ryleigh Dangerfield (12R) was selected to the Queensland Under 18 Women's Softball Team, which placed 4th at the Australian Championships.
- Swimming—The following students competed at the Australian Age Swimming Championships: Marina Abu Shamelah (12G); Holly Fleming (9M); Ava Tran (10G); Lucy Vaughan (12O); Lillian Wall (11B); and Cate Ward (10B).
- Swimming—Karla Rimmington (10L) was awarded a Bronze Medal in the 15 Years 50 m Butterfly at the School Sport Australia 2023 Swimming National Championships.
- Taekwondo—Amarlie Evans (9O) was the winner of the Under 59 kgs National Taekwondo Championship, and was selected to the Australian team for the Combat Australia European Tour.
- Ultimate Disc (Frisbee)—Anika Flanagan (11E) and Asha Stewart (11G) represented Queensland in the Australian Youth Ultimate Championships (AYUC) in a mixed team placing 3rd. Asha was selected to the Green and Gold women's merit team to participate in 2023-2024 Under 20 Australian women's team.

HIGHLIGHTS

Academic

- Tung-Hi Ma (12H) and Natasha Miric (12O) were awarded QCAA Distinguished Academic Achiever Awards.
- Natasha Miric (12O) was awarded a *Liveris Academy Undergraduate Scholarship* from The University of Queensland.
- Caroline Vujovic (12M) was awarded a *Vice Chancellor's Academic Achievement Scholarship* from Griffith University.

Music

- Irene Shim (12G) received her Licentiate in Music (LMusA) diploma awarded by The Australian Music Examinations Board.
- Annabelle Abrahams (9G), Iha Agrawal (11R), Margaret Barrett-Beck (10W), Myella Jago (11H), Aurora Lin (8B), Clare O'Quinn (11L), Shreeya Patel (12M), Jaqueline Trappett (12O), Sarah Young (12H) and Tiffany Yuen (9R) were chosen to represent BGGS at the Australian Combined Schools Music Festival in Perth.
- Lisa Walsham (11R) received her Associate Diploma in Music (AMusA) awarded by the Australian Music Examinations Board.
- Lisa Walsham (11R) was selected to be a part of the High School Honours Performance Series at the Sydney Opera House.
- The following students were accepted into the State Honours Program held at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music: Remy Brittain (7H) (Cello Sir Charles Mackerras String Orchestra—cello); Zahli Cordingley (7R) (Percy Grainger Wind Orchestra—French Horn); Clare O'Quinn (11L) (Malcolm Williamson Vocal Ensemble – Alto); Margaret Barrett-Beck (10W) (Jazz Vocal Ensemble—Soprano); Ayisha del Rosario (12W) (Colin Brumby Vocal Ensemble—Alto); Rosalia Ma (8W) (William Lovelock Wind Ensemble—Flute); and Alice Tian (8W) (Percy Grainger Wind Orchestra—Flute).
- Two students were accepted into the Australian Honours Program: Emma Nguyen (8E) (Symphony Orchestra—cello); and Emily Chang (8O) (Symphony Orchestra—Oboe).
- Aurora Lin (8B) was awarded an Associate Diploma (AMusA) for violin by The Australian Music Examinations Board.
- Rosalia Ma (8W) was awarded an Associate Diploma (AmusA) for flute by the Australian Music Examinations Board.





HIGHLIGHTS

Service

- Katie Dore (10W) and Anna McAuley (12R) received the 2023 Australian Defence Force Long Tan Youth Leadership and Teamwork Award, which recognises students who demonstrate leadership and teamwork in service of their school and community.
- Ajin Kyoung (10H) was elected to the Lord Mayor's Youth Advisory Council representatives.
- Sameera Prasad (10W), Angelica Ng (10B), and Claudia Chin (10E) were elected to the Lord Mayor's Young Environmental Leadership Network.
- Sunnie Lin (10M) and Yasi (Selina) Li (12H) received the 2022 Australian Defence Force Future Innovators Award in recognition of their achievements in STEM subjects.
- Elizabeth Shoebridge (12B), Louise Campbell (12O), and Natasha Miric (12O) were awarded Secondary School Citizenship Certificates from the Queensland Branch of the Order of Australia Association.
- The School launched its Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) during National Reconciliation Week.

Clubs and Activities

- Year 12 students, Piper Dean (12O), Eliza Horsley (12G) and Emily Ryan (12E), won the Grand Final Moot in the QUT Law Society Schools Mooting Competition.

Staff

- The Australian Council for Educational Leaders (Queensland) awarded Principal, Ms Jacinda Euler Welsh, the 2023 Miller-Grassie Award for Outstanding Leadership in Education.
- The Australian Council for Educational Leaders (Queensland) awarded Ms Susan Garson, Director of the Centre for School-Wide Pedagogy, a 2023 Pivotal People Leadership Award.
- The Australian Council for Educational Leaders (ACEL) awarded Principal, Ms Jacinda Euler Welsh, a national ACEL Leadership Award for 2023, presented at the ACEL 38th Annual National Awards Ceremony in September.

／ BGGGS TO WELCOME YEARS 5 AND 6

In Term 3, the School advised its community of an historic decision—the introduction of Years 5 and 6 to Brisbane Girls Grammar School in 2026.

This exciting development will see the education for which the School is nationally renowned become reimagined, prioritising the unique needs, interests, and potential of upper primary students. The School consulted extensively with its community to develop an educational offering that is creative, inspiring, and rigorous. The BGGGS Junior School will expand the School's educational offering to reflect the contemporary expectations of many families and prospective parents.

Directly across from the Senior Campus, the purpose-designed facility will provide a unique primary school environment for Year 5 and 6 students to experience a sense of comfort in their own surroundings. The Junior School will include classrooms, specialist learning spaces for Science, Art, and Music, as well as a canteen, a dedicated junior library and playground. Comprising about 200 girls (100 in Year 5 and 100 in Year 6), the Junior School will be a close-knit, supportive environment in which girls can comfortably find their place.



The arrival of our new and youngest students in 2026 marks a new era in Girls Grammar's long and distinguished history. The Junior School will prepare students for secondary education while retaining essential formative experiences. A separation from the Senior School campus, both physical and experiential, ensures that transitioning to Year 7, whether from the BGGS Junior School or other primary schools, remains a 'fresh start' for all students.

An architectural rendering of the Junior School designed by m3architecture



An architectural rendering of the Junior School library



An architectural rendering of the Junior School play space

The School's model for primary-aged girls is grounded in Girls Grammar's philosophy of a broad, liberal education. There will be an emphasis on character development, student wellbeing, and the engagement of primary teachers that bring out the best in every child and nurture a sense of community and shared responsibility.

Brisbane Girls Grammar School was founded on a commitment to excellence in education that inspires a love of lifelong learning in students. As we expand the School's educational offering, our leadership in the provision of an exemplary education, and reputation as one of Australia's leading girls' schools, will be maintained and strengthened.

FINANCE

Summary of financial performance

In accordance with the *Strategic Design 2023-2025*, the School's financial management must deliver appropriate, sustainable, transparent and empowering fiscal management that balances the surplus requirement for future reinvestment with immediate educational program priorities.

Annual Financial Statements for 2023 highlight the School's strong financial position.

The annual operating surplus of \$3.03M (2022: \$3.68M) was driven by the following factors:

- tuition fees in 2023 were increased by 4.5 per cent
- a strong return on the School's investments and interest income
- continued strong philanthropic support, with contributions received towards the School's bursary and building funds
- consistent and strong operational and financial delivery.

The School has also recorded other comprehensive income of \$9.3M with an increase to the asset revaluation reserve as a result of an indexation review of the School's land and buildings.

The School has continued to generate consistent and reasonable surpluses each year, which are used by the School to fund payments on capital loans, capital expenses and to provide for future capital projects and ensure long-term sustainability.

The main revenue source of the School is tuition fees, comprising 75 per cent of total revenue (2022: 76 per cent). The Board remains committed to keeping the School's annual increase in tuition fees as low as possible for the broad and deep offerings sought and expected by our families, and to ensuring a consistent and reliable approach when setting fees. This includes maintaining a long-standing policy of an all-inclusive fee, with no additional levies, while addressing a decline in real terms of government funding from both State and Federal Governments.

Three of the most significant categories of expenditure in delivering the exceptional education for which Girls Grammar is renowned are:

- employing the best teachers and other professional staff it is possible to secure and remunerating them fairly and appropriately, this representing around 64 per cent (2022: 64 per cent) of our annual expenditure
- delivering excellent academic programs
- providing the resources required to deliver the current quality and standard of a Brisbane Girls Grammar School student experience and, additionally, the School's physical resourcing requirements into the future.

The ongoing growth, liquidity and financial stability of the School is supported by the ongoing careful review of the School's procurement and efficiency opportunities to find sustainable cost and productivity savings without reducing or impacting on the experience of its students, families and staff.

Capital programs and infrastructure

The School continued investment in environmental sustainability initiatives, and launched its Sustainability Policy in 2023.

2023 saw the ongoing realisation of the School's continued investment in IT infrastructure and systems across the Spring Hill and Marrapatta campuses, with an increased focus on cybersecurity.

The School also continued to invest in improved amenities on the Spring Hill campus throughout 2023. This included the greening of spaces, which directly benefitted students.

Monitoring of financial performance and effectiveness

Management and the Board of Trustees, with support from its Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee, continually monitor the School's financial performance and effectiveness. This is undertaken through monthly financial reporting, a robust budget process and annual review of the School's 10-Year strategic forecasting.



GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

The School acknowledges the contributions made by the State and Commonwealth Governments in the form of grant allocations. The grants received and approved in 2023 included:

- Recurrent State and Commonwealth Government Grants, including Indigenous assistance:
 - Commonwealth Grants—\$5,944,699
 - State Government Grants—\$3,613,471
- Queensland State Endowment Grant provided to Grammar Schools in Queensland to assist with the additional cost of complying with State Government legislation for Statutory Bodies—\$21,500

COMMUNITY

Girls Grammar is supported by a strong community of parents, alumnae and friends who are dedicated to providing students with the best possible education. The School is grateful for their commitment to our shared purpose.





PHILANTHROPY AT OUR HEART AND FUTURE—THREE YEARS OF CELEBRATION

DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNAE RELATIONS

2023 has been a year of reflection as we prepare to celebrate monumental occasions in the School's history.

Looking back has been vital as we plan with integrity for our future. In 1875 Sir Charles Lilley led a community effort to raise funds to establish a girls' school—a venture hailed as a 'radical experiment'. This trailblazing initiative laid the foundation for Brisbane Girls Grammar School to be grounded in a philosophy of philanthropy. Lilley's ethos has been carried throughout the School's rich history, and continues to this day.

Philanthropic support ensures that current and future Grammar girls continue to receive the exemplary, broad and liberal education for which the School is renowned, in alignment with Sir Charles Lilley's vision. Giving transcends the individual; it is a collective force that unites the BGGGS community, and becomes a timeless gift that echoes across generations for the Grammar girls of today and tomorrow.

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2023 hundreds of Grammar Women united at their milestone reunions across Brisbane, Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast, as well as at Sydney and Melbourne events.
- The School hosted an international reunion event for Grammar Women in the UK and Europe, held in London.
- The newly established Parents & Friends Association Bursary was awarded for the first time to a student commencing Year 7 in 2024. A total of \$673 000 was raised from the BGGGS community, supporting a Girls Grammar education.
- Brisbane Girls Grammar School was honoured to receive an extraordinary contribution from an exceptional woman. It has enabled the establishment of a perpetual bursary that will generously and profoundly impact generations of future girls and women. The inaugural bursary will be awarded to a student who will commence in Year 7 2025, the School's Sesquicentenary Year.

Alumnae at the School's function in London on 11 May 2023



2024

This year marks 125 of the Years of the Old Girls Association (OGA); an integral thread in the fabric of the School community since 1889. The OGA comprises an enthusiastic committee of Grammar Women and volunteers who share a connection to Girls Grammar and take great pride in working alongside the School to support alumnae and School initiatives. We thank the OGA for their ongoing support and adding 'magic' touches to students' experiences at the School.

2025

In 2025 we will celebrate 150 years of education at Brisbane Girls Grammar School. We encourage the entire Girls Grammar community and our Grammar Women network to join us in marking history, at a range of celebratory events throughout the year.

2026

2026 signifies a contemporary evolution in the history of the School with the commencement of Years 5 and 6 in a new purpose-designed, dynamic educational environment. We invite you to consider your role in the expansion and continued development of an enriching Girls Grammar education, by supporting the Junior School.

We thank everyone in our community of donors, Grammar Women, and volunteers for sharing our vision, and generously supporting the provision of a broad, liberal education for girls. Every contribution ensures that Brisbane Girls Grammar School continues to enrich the lives of our students through learning, empowering them to become inspiring leaders and informed citizens. We invite you to explore our *Impact of Giving* report to uncover the people in our community who, just like Sir Charles Lilley, believe in the power of philanthropy.



Amanda O'Hara (Warrick, 1986), Greg Cooper, Catherine Duffy, and Trustee, Professor Maher Gandhi, at the School's Donor Thank You function

THANK YOU

The Board of Trustees and the Principal, on behalf of the School, thank members of the Brisbane Girls Grammar School community for their generous support in 2023.

The Au Family	Ms Jane Hailes	Johanne Neill & Ben Dodd
Dr A Bell AM	Dorothy Hawkins	Kerryn Newton
The Bowden Family	J Hennessey	Prof James Nicklin
Ian & Janelle Brown	Dr Cherrell Hirst AO	Susan & Georgie O'Hare
Dr Alison Bruce	The Hodge Family	Robyn Osborn
Kay Bryan	Teresa Howard	Dr Juanita Pappalardo & Dr Matthew Peters
Ms S Cali	Ms Elizabeth Jameson AM & Dr Abbe Anderson	The Phua Family
Campbell Family	Ruth Jans	Andrew Pollock
The Caposecco Family	The Knight Family	Dr Glenda Powell AM
The Cardell Family	The Kolff van Oosterwijk Family	Maurice Prendergast
Dr K Choo & Dr M Thomas	The Liu and Chen Family Trust	David Rawson
Jill Corrigan	The Li-Zhang Family	Janine Schmidt AM
B & S Cox	The Hon Justice John Logan & Mrs Janice Logan	Kim Selwa
Jim & Tina Diakogiannis	Christine Lonergan	The Shaw Family
S Edwards	The Lui Family	Shorrock-Browne Family
The Ekeocha Family	Allison Luque	Jasjeet Sihota
Ms Jacinda Euler Welsh	J & C MacDonald	Dr Carol Sorensen
Evelyn	J McKay	Lorraine Thornquist
Dr Henry Fang & Ms Tammy Liang	Dr S & Mr H McKay	Mr Jim Truesdale
The Fanning Family	The McMurdo Family Fund	Dr P & Mrs M Vujovic
Dr Jody Forbes & Dr A Smith	Saxon Mew	Louise Walls
Dr M Fry	Paul & Melanie Mitchell	Robin Williams
The Fu Family	Dr C Mittelheuser AM	The Yong Gee Family
Gandhi Family	Ms L Mungomery	Peter & Nicole Zentveld
The Gianduzzo Family		

Sophia Beanland Circle

Anonymous
Dr Barbara Burge
Mrs Kay Brassil
Mrs Ann Caston
Mrs Julie Caton

Mrs Tatiana Coulter
Mrs Lesley Davies
Mrs Jenny Everett
Ms Elizabeth Jameson AM
Ms Linda Lee
Mrs Jeanette Lockey

Gifts in Wills

Estate of Beth Muir Dawson

Thank you to the School's Support Groups and volunteers for their important contribution and service throughout the year.

Parents & Friends Association
P&F Uniform Shop
Old Girls Association

Mothers Group
Fathers Group
Music Support Group

Rowing Support Group
Water Polo Support Group
Grammar Women Mentors

Acknowledgements as at April 2024. Please contact the Development team via phone 07 3332 1396 or email development@bggs.qld.edu.au should you have any concerns.

GRAMMAR WOMEN ACHIEVEMENTS

Students' time at the School forms the foundation for a lifetime of connection to Girls Grammar and their fellow Grammar sisters. Grammar Women, incorporating the Old Girls Association, provides a framework for past students to maintain, strengthen and develop connections with fellow alumnae.



6B Form picnic on the Mirima, 1960. Else Shepherd (Budtz-Olsen, 1960), second from left

‘We were encouraged in whatever paths we would follow in life, to be women with a good store of knowledge—at best a love of learning—an in-built curiosity, and a sense of responsibility and kindness towards others. The seeds were here of the unassuming, generous, and profoundly ethical leader Else would become.’

Dr Ruth Blair (1960), in tribute to classmate, Professor Else Shepherd AM (1944-2023)

GRAMMAR WOMEN

Achievements

- Caitlin Brough (2022) and Sally Grice (2022) were awarded The University of Queensland's Ramsay Undergraduate Scholarship.
- Shanna Heath (2022) was offered Griffith University's Sir Samuel Griffith Scholarship for academic excellence via the Principal Recommendation program.
- Ellen Manique (2022) was awarded the University of Southern Queensland's Chancellor's Excellence Scholarship.
- Sarah Small (2022) was awarded a Queensland University of Technology Budding Entrepreneur Scholarship.
- Kirra Van Nispen (2022) was presented with a Distinguished Academic Achievers Award (one of 41) at the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority, Queensland Certificate of Education's Achievement Awards for 2022.
- Alexandra Wilson (2016) received a Global Voices Scholarship to attend the World Health Organisation's World Health Assembly in Geneva in May 2023.
- Dr Alison Todd (1974) was made a Member (AM) in the General Division of the Order of Australia in the 2023 King's Birthday Honours list for her service to medical research and to tertiary education. Dr Todd was also awarded the Prime Minister's Prize for Innovation in 2022 recognising her work in inspiring other women to pursue a career in science and technology, noting that at her own company, Speedx, 70 per cent of the 100-plus workforce and 50 per cent of management are women.
- Susan Croft (Rolley, 1973) was awarded a Medal (OAM) for service to community health as a physiotherapist.
- Mary Seefried (Nunn, 1963) was made a Member (AM) in the General Division of the Order of Australia for her significant service to equestrian sports.
- Dr Chloe Yap (2013) was jointly named as The University of Queensland's Graduate of the Year.
Chloe graduated in 2022 with a Doctor of Medicine (MD) as a University Medallist with a GPA of 6.85, and completed a Doctor of Philosophy, combined with the MD program and a Graduate Certificate in Business Leadership (Medical Leadership Program) in 2020.
Chloe's achievements have received multiple commendations from international and local research organisations. She also created Charting Med, a medical education website to help fellow students, and has regularly volunteered as a peer tutor with the UQ Medical Society. She is also a passionate advocate of the arts, performing in multiple orchestras including in the Australian Medical Student's Orchestra, National University of Singapore Orchestra and as Principal cellist in the Queensland Youth Symphony.

STAFF

The staff of Brisbane Girls Grammar School deliver the broad, liberal education for which the School is renowned.

The School's teachers are central to its culture of deep learning, possessing extensive knowledge of their discipline, an unending passion for discovery, and the ability to nurture creativity and a sense of possibility in the minds of students.





BRISBANE GIRLS GRAMMAR SCHOOL STAFF

EXECUTIVE STAFF

Principal

Ms Jacinda Euler Welsh
BA, GDipEd, MEdSt, MACE, MACEL,
MAICD

Deputy Principal

Mrs Anne Ingram
BSc, DipEd, AMusA, MACEL

Deputy Principal (Academic)

Dr Bruce Addison
BA, BBus (Econ), BEdSt, PhD, DipEd,
MAICD, MACE, FACEL

Deputy Principal (Co-curriculum)

Ms Sophie Mynott
BA LLB, GDipEd, MIntRel

Chief Financial Officer and Secretary to the Board

Ms Jane Hailes
BCom/BBus (Man) CA

Dean of Studies

Mr James Keogh
DipTeach, BEd, MEd, MACE, MAIP,
MACEL

Dean of Operations

Ms Tennille Cummings
BSc, GDipEd, MEd (Leadership and
Mgt), MACEL

Dean of Students

Ms Melinda Egan
BA, GDipEd, MEd

Associate Dean (Wellbeing)

Dr Jody Forbes
BA(Hons), PhD

Associate Dean (Administration)

Ms Sarah Frew, BA,
BEd, MEdSt(Leadership),
MEduProfSt(Research)

Associate Dean (Academic Administration)

Ms Elaine Serisier
BEd(Hons) (Acting Dean of Studies,
Term 1)

Director of Communications and Engagement

Ms Veena Herron
BJourn, BCommun(Hons), GradCert
(Research), MIntRel

Director of Development and Alumnae Relations

Ms Petrina Gilmore
BA, MTEM, CFRE
(Term 3)

Director of Information Technology

Mrs Cherie Nowlan
BInfoTech (Hons)
(Term 1)

Director of Information Technology

Mr Sean Lutton
(Terms 2-)

Director of Human Resources

Ms Retha Wood
BA(Psych), BCom(Hons)(Industrial
Sociology), MBA, MAHRI

Property and Capital Works Manager

Mr Aaron Bowden
DipProjectMgt,DipBus(Frontline
Management),
DipBuilding&Construction,
CertIVWHS, FSA,
QBCC Licence No 1264810

DIRECTORS

Centre for School-wide Pedagogy

Ms Susan Garson
BA/BEd, MEdStud

Creative Arts

Mrs Katrina Riveros
BA(Drama), GradDipEd (Acting)

English

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Health and Physical Education

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Instrumental Music

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GradDipEd(Sec), GradCertEd
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Mathematics

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Outdoor Education

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Science

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GradDipCommComp, EdD

Service

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BHMS(Ed), CertIVTrngAssmnt

Sport

Ms Jane Gooden
BHMS(Ed)

Staff Fellowship

Mr Andrew Pennay
BA, BEd

Technologies

Mr Brendon Thomas
CertFineArts, BEd, PGradCertOEd,
MEd, CertIVTrngAssmnt

HEADS OF HOUSE

Beanland

Mrs Sacha Cross
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England

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Coaching)

Gibson

Mrs Hazel Boltman
HDE(Physical Science)

Griffith

Ms Stephanie Thomas
BEd(Sec), GCertEdMgmt

Hirschfeld

Mrs Alice Dabelstein
BEd

Lilley

Mrs Sybil Edwards
BA, DipT

Mackay

Ms Ruth Jans
BA, BEd

O'Connor

Ms Sarah Boyle
BA, BEd(GE), GradCertRE

Woolcock

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BA, GradDipEd

Year 7-8 Advisor

Mrs Sally Callie
BEd (Acting Head of Beanland House,
Term 4)

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BBusMngt, BComm,
GradDipEd(Sec), GradDipCA

Ancient History

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Coordinator of Drama Productions

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BCI, Bed (Hons), AssocDip
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MED(TESOL)

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A, MA, MIB(Hons), PhD, GradDipEd

English Curriculum Development

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English Years 7 to 8

Ms Laura Dewar
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Mr Richard Laur
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Head of Subject—Literature,
Term 2-)

Literature

Ms Meghan Parry
BA/BEd(Sec)
(Term 1)

French

Ms Natalie Holden
BA (Hons), GDTL

Geography

Ms Yonnie McDonnell
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German

Mrs Izabela Minuzzo
Licencjat Magistra

History

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Humanities Year 7

Ms Anna Flourentzou
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Health and Physical Education Curriculum Development

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Latin

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Learning Support

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Learning Innovation and Design

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CertIVTrngAssmnt

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Mathematics Curriculum Development Years 7 to 8

Ms Maryanne Christie
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Physics

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Resource Development and NAPLAN

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GrDipEd(Senior Yrs) (Acting Director
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Visual Art

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MACE

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(Term 2-)

BRISBANE GIRLS GRAMMAR SCHOOL STAFF

Mrs Kristine Cooke BA, DipEd, GradDipResT, MEd(TeachLib)	Mx Em Glover BCreatArts, Mteach	Ms Kate Kregenbrink BEd, MEd(Leadership and Mgt)
Ms Kara Coughlan BSc, PostGRadDipEd (Terms 1-2)	Ms Laura Green BA, GDipEd and MURP	Mr Andrew Lanning BEd(Sec), BSc
Ms Jessica Crabbe BA/BEd	Mr Devon Greetham BOutdoorEd, GradDipTeach(Sec) (Terms 1-3)	Mrs Carolyn Lansdown BA(OutEd), GradDipEd (Term 1)
Dr Alice Cranney BA(Lang) (Hons), MTeach (Secondary), PhD	Mr Ian Hamilton BA, GradDipOutdoorEd, DipEd (Term 1)	Mr Daniel Larkin BA, BEd
Ms Angela Crawley BA, BEd(Sec)	Ms Christina Harrow BA (Hons) (Acting Coordinator of Clubs and Activities, Term 4)	Mrs Catherine Lay BSc, GradCertA, BEd(Sec)(GE) (Terms 1-3)
Dr Anthony Cupitt BEd(Sec)(GE), BA(Hons), MA(Philosophy), PhD	Ms Ruoyi (Lorraine) He BEd(Sec)/BA, MEd(Leadership and Mgt), GradDipTESOL	Mrs Emily Levett BA, BEd(MidYsSch), MEd, GradCertEd(CareerDev&Couns)
Ms Renae Davis BEd(LOTE)	Mr Allan Herbst BEd(Sec), DipAcc	Mr Owen Lewis MAppFin, Post Graduate Certificate of Education, BSc(Hons) (Terms 3-4)
Dr Debra da Silva PhD(Philosophy), MTeach, GradDipBusAdmin, BA(Hons), Becon	Ms Abigail Hills BVA, GradDipEd	Ms Belinda Lindsay BA, BTArt, GDipEd
Ms Rebecca Dover MEnvSc, BBiomedSc, GradDipEd	Ms Jo-Anne Hine MVA, Grad Dip Teach, Dip Fine Arts, Lead Teacher	Ms Perri Lohrisch BSc/BEd(Sec)
Mrs Sally Downes BA, DipEd	Ms Caitlin Hockings BHlthSport&PhysEd(Hons) (Term 4-)	Mrs Ameer Magee BSc, GradDipEd
Ms Kirsten Eadie BEd, GCCI, MEd(LeadershipMgt) (Acting Head of Department (Visual Art), Term 4)	Ms Marie Hubert-Delisle BMarketing&Media, GradDipEd	Ms Maddison Mair BTech(Sec)
Ms Jane Elshaw BEd(Sec) (Terms 2-3)	Ms Alexa Johnson BA/BEd(Sec) (Term 4)	Mr Paul Martineau BA, BEd
Mrs Raechelle Finch GradDipEd, BHMS (Acting Head of Hirschfeld House, Term 4)	Dr Paula Johnson BA(Hons I), PhD, GradDipEd (Acting Head of Subject - Latin, Term 2)	Mrs Lee Mazzaglia BEd, DipT
Ms Caitlin Finn BEd(Sec) (Term 3-)	Ms Stephanie Johnson BAppSc(HMS), BEd(Sec) (Acting Head of Department-Biology, Term 4)	Mrs Kate McCarthy BHMS, BAppSc(Ed)
Ms Sharni Folland BFineArts, GDipEd(Sec)	Mrs Eldene Johnston BEd	Ms Belinda McGarry BSc, BEd, MEd(Leadership and Mgt)
Ms Kathryn Fraser MTeach(Sec), CA, LLB(Law)(Hons) (Term 1)	Ms Taylor Jones BDes(Hons), MTeach(Sec)	Mr Christian Moffat BA(Hons)(ContHist), MA(ModHist), PGCE
Mrs Emily Frazer BSc, GradDipEd	Ms Carmen Keating MBiomedE, BMechE(Hons), GradDipEd (Acting Head of Subject— Physics, Term 2)	Ms Prue Morgan BAGSc, DipEd
Ms Hannah Gillam BSc, GradDipEd	Mrs Kate Kildey BEd(Sec)(Hons I), MLI, MACE	Ms Susan Morrison BEd(Sc)
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		Mrs Danielle Munro BTeach&Learn/BAppSc
		Ms Kylie Nealon BA, DipTchg (Sec), MA

Mr James Nicholls
BBus (Finance), GDipT (Sec)

Ms Stevie Nicholson
Bachelor of Sport and Recreation
and GDipEd(Sec)(
Terms 3-4)

Mrs Madeleine Nielsen
BEd(Sec)

Mrs Joanne Nisbett
BEd

Ms Brittany Nunan
BHealth&ExSc, GradDipEd
(Senior Yrs)

Mrs Anna O’Gorman
BSc(Hons), DipEd

Mr Michael O’Loughlin
BSc, GrDipEd
(Terms 1-2)

Ms Amy Penberthy
BHLthSport&PhysEd

Ms Zoe Penman
BMus, BEd(Sec) (Acting Head of
Department—Curriculum Music,
during Term 2)

Ms Shivaun Pereira
BSc/BEd(Sec)

Ms Deborah Perz
BSc, BEd

Ms Cathy Rees
DipT, GradCertHlthSc. (WomHlth)

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BEd (Acting HoS-English Years 9-10,
Terms 2-4)

Mrs Jacqueline Rose-Diamond
BSc, PostgradDipEd(Sec)

Mr Jack Saunders
GDipEd(Sec), BMus(Perf) and
DipArts (Term 3-)

Mrs Rachel Schafferius
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Mrs Caitlin Simic
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Ms Hannah Smith
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(Terms 2-4)

Mrs Katy Smith
BSc (Hons), PGCE

Mr Paul Soward
BEd(Sec)

Ms Kelli Stewart
MSc, BSc, GradDipTeach

Dr Juliet Stone
BSc (Hons), GradDipEd, PhD

Ms Nisha Swanston
BSc(Hons)(Multimedia DesandTech),
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Ms Kathryn Talbot, BA/BEd(Sec)
(Hons), MPhil (Acting Director of
Service, Term 4)

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Ms Morgan Todd
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Ms Dianne Williams
BA, GradDipTech
(Term 2)

Ms Kayley Williamson
BHLthSportsandPhysEd, MEd
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Ms Jennifer Wood
BA BA(Hons) MEd(TESOL)
MTeach(Sec)
(Term 2)

Mrs Christine Woodford
BSc, DipEd
(Term 4)

Ms Samantha Young
BEd

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC STAFF

Accompanist, Piano Teacher

Ms Sherelle Eyles
MMus(RCM), ARCM(GradDip),
BMus, LMusA, AMusA

Accompanist, Piano Teacher

Ms Kylie Los
MMus, BMus

Accompanist, Piano Teacher

Ms Kerry Nian
BMus, MMusConducting

Accompanist, Piano Teacher

Ms Kathryn Sander
DipMus(Creative Arts), BMus(Perf—
Accompaniment and Chamber Music),
AMusA

Accompanist, Piano Teacher

Ms Cara Tran
BMus(Hons)

Band Director/Percussion Teacher

Mr Jacob Cavanough
BMus

Band Director, Woodwind Teacher

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BMus, GrDipEd(Sec)

Choral Teacher

Mrs Wendy Rolls
BEd, MMusSt, GCMusSt, BVSc

Choral/Voice Teacher

Ms Ruani Dias-Jayasinha
BMus(MusEd), BA (Acting Coordinator
of Choirs, 2023)

Choral/Voice Teacher

Ms Chloe Evans
BMus, GradCertMusic, MTeach(Sec)

Coordinator of Bands

Ms Ashleigh Porter
BMus, GradDipEd, AMusA

Coordinator of Choirs

Ms Clare Finlayson
BMus, BEd(Sec)

Coordinator of Strings

Mr Michael Patterson
BMus(Hons), MPhil
GradDipLearning&Teach(Sec),
LMusA, AMusA

Flute and Flute Quartet Teacher

Ms Emily Smith
BMus

BRISBANE GIRLS GRAMMAR SCHOOL STAFF

Flute, Oboe and Bassoon Teacher

Mrs Anne MacAskill Auld
BMus(MusEd)

Guitar Ensemble Teacher

Mr Ian Weston
BJS(Dist), MMusSt

Instrumental Music Teacher

Dr Bernardo Alviz Iriarte
BMus, PhD Music (Composition)

Instrumental Music Teacher

Ms Helen Butcher
BMus

Instrumental Music Teacher

Ms Esther Colleter
BMus(Hons), BEd
(Term 4)

Instrumental Music Teacher

Mr Paul Johnston
BMusPerf, GradDipEd

String Orchestra Director/String Teacher

Mrs Connie Garrett-Benson, BMus,
GradDipEd

String Orchestra Director/String Teacher

Ms Helen Sharp
BMus, GradDipMus

String Orchestra Director/String Teacher

Ms Josephine Pollicina
BMus(Hons), MPhil

String Orchestra Director/String Teacher

Mr Jonathan Zorzetto, BMus/BEd

LANGUAGE ASSISTANTS

French

Ms Valérie Gorse

German

Mrs Martina Todd
BCom, GradDipAdvAcctg, CA,
GAICD

Japanese

Ms Aya Topp
BA(Ed)

Latin

Ms Beatrice Bertazza

SPECIALIST STAFF

Director of Tertiary Pathways

Ms Louise Walls
BEd, MEd(Guidance &
Counselling), CDAA, QASA

Careers Counsellor

Ms Karla Shaw
BA, BEd, MEdSt

School Psychologist

Ms Teri Kim
MPsych(Clin)

School Psychologist

Ms Lisa Manning
BA(Hons), MClinPsych

School Psychologist

Mrs Tara McLachlan
BPsychSc, MPsychClin, MAPS

School Psychologist

Ms Michaela Jepsen
BPsySch

School Psychologist

Ms Marie-Claire Sauvage
BPsch, MClinPsch
(Terms 1-2)

School Nurse

Ms Sarah Duke
BN

School Nurse

Mrs Rebekah Carter
(Term 4)

School Nurse

Mrs Jessica Reid
(Term 4)

School Nurse

Ms Sanchia Watchorn
BN, GCPaedNursSt

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Academic Administration Officer

Kim Faulks
(Terms 1-2)

Academic Administration Officer

Ms Ashleigh Hextall

Academic Administration Officer

Ms Olivia Munro
BBus, CertIIIEvent&Tourism

Academic Administration Officer

Ms Bianca Craven

Academic Administration Officer

Ms Mina Keenan

Administrative Assistant—ASC

Ms Gillian McHarg

Administrative Assistant—ASC

Mrs Jennifer Stafford, DipBus

Administrative Assistant—Music

Mrs Talluah Harper

Administrative Assistant—Sport

Ms Catherine Taylor
BNursing

Administration Assistant

Ms Tracey Cooper
Term 1-3)

Administration Officer (Data Entry)

Kaszandra Ogden
Cert III in Early Childhood Ed
(Term 4-)

Administration Officer (Dean's Office Support)

Ms Poppy Comino
(Terms 1-2)

Administration Officer (Floreamus Centre)

Ms Jacinta Akers

Administration Officer (Principal's Office)

Mrs Rachael Quinn
DipEventMgt, DipBus, DipHosMgt,
CertIVTrain&Ass

Administration Officer (Student Care)

Ms Tamara Archer

Administration Officer (Student Reception)

Ms Viv Neurohr, DipBus,
CertIVBusAdmin

Accountant

Mrs Emma Strang, BBus(Acc), CPA

Application and Data Lead

Mr Lewis Kelly, BInfTech

Assistant Accountant

Ms Monica Djaja, BAcc, MCom

Alumnae Relations Manager

Ms Antonia Swindells, DipEvents

Archivist

Dr Dominique Baines
DPhil(Arts), MA(Studies in Art History),
BVA
(Term 3-)

Athlete Development Manager

Mr Paul Pearce

Business Analyst

Ms Aleksandra Markovic
BA
(Term 1)

Senior Business Analyst/Project Manager

Ms Kristina Formuzal
MSocSci(Econs),
GradCertProjectMgt

Carpenter

Mr Brock Gaffney
CertIII Carpentry

Communications Manager

Ms Jackie Hayes
BA (Hons)

Communications Officer—Senior

Ms Keziah Sydes
BCommun, BA

Ms Felicity Coye

BCommun
(Terms 1-2)

Ms April Euler

BA(Hons)
(Term 4-)

Communications Officer

Ms Sophie Chirgwin
BJ
(Term 1)

Communications Officer

Ms Hannah Davies
BCommun
(Terms 2-)

Communications Projects Manager

Ms Robyn Osborn
BSc, DipEd

Community Engagement and Events Manager

Ms Chloe Stark
BComm/BA

Community Engagement and Events Coordinator

Ms Sonya Waters
BIHTM

Development and Alumnae Relations Coordinator

Ms Giselle Versteegen
MBA, AssocDipBus
(Terms 1 - 2)

Development and Alumnae Relations Coordinator

Mr Joseph Stewart
(Term 3 -)

Drama and Music Technical Assistant

Ms Suzannah Ferry

Electrician

Mr Luke Munro
Cert III Electrotechnology,
Cert IV TrngAssmnt,
Cert IV TeleCommEngTech,
Cert IV ElectInst

Enrolments Manager

Ms Kelly Ryan
BAsianSt, PGCertTESOL,
Cert IV TrngAssmnt

Head of Enrolments

Ms Jennifer Todd
BA
(Term 4-)

Enrolments Assistant Manager

Mrs Nicole Budgen
ASSDipBus
(Term 2-)

Enrolments Officer

Mrs Lisa Horan

Executive Assistant to the Principal

Ms Lara Parker

Facilities Coordinator

Ms Bridget Briais

Facilities Operations Manager

Mr Christopher Bailey-Bolton

Facilities Administration Assistant

Mr Sebastian Bornkessel
(Terms 1-3)

Facilities Support Officer

Mrs Leonie Doran

Facilities Support Officer

Mr Nicolas Denholm

Facilities Support Officer

Mr Patrick Hayes

Facilities Support Officer

Mr Aaron Scott-James

Property and Facilities Maintenance Manager (Marrapatta)

Mr Joel Dunmore

Finance Manager

Ms Melissa Galloway
BCom(Acc)

Finance Manager

Ms Hannah Jones
BCom(Acc), CPA

Finance Officer

Mrs Fran Letson
BBus, Mbus

Health and Safety Advisor

Ms Joan Coyle
GradDipOHS

Horticulturist

Mr Ben McCann

Human Resources Manager

Ms Brigitte Bickham

Human Resources Support Officer

Ms Logan Duke
BBus(HRM)

Human Resources Support Officer

Ms Taylor Hayes
BBus(HRMan) (Mktg),
Cert IV JusticeAdmin

IT Support Officer

Mr Jay Siddhpura

IT Helpdesk Support Officer

Mrs Allison Luque
Cert IV IT Support, DipIT
(Term 1)

IT Helpdesk Support Officer

Mr Timothy Hales
MInfTech, Bachelor of Audio
(Sound Production)
(Term 4)

IT Helpdesk Support Officer

Mr David Jernigan
BCompSc, BCompEng

IT Services Manager

Mr Breck Felsman
BInfoTech, MCSE

IT Services Operations Manager

Mr Paul Murrin
DipIT, DipIT (Network Engineering)
(Terms 1-3)

Mr Tristan Royce-Carter
DipDigMultimedia Design
(Term 4)

IT Services Operations Team Leader

Mr Tyson Booth
DipIT

IT Service Desk Officer

Mr Robert Butler
(Terms 1-3)

BRISBANE GIRLS GRAMMAR SCHOOL STAFF

IT Support AV Specialist

Mr David Joncheff

Laboratory Technician

Mr Anthony Brinin
BAppSci

Laboratory Technician—Biology

Mr Stephen Berry
BBIomedSc
(Terms 1-2)

Laboratory Technician—Chemistry

Ms Emily Grundgeiger
BAppSc

Senior Laboratory Technician—Physics

Mr Anthony Lumsden
BSc(Hons)

Librarian—Special Collections

Mrs Jenny Davis
BA(Hons)
GradDipArts

Academic Research Librarian

Mrs Laura Thompson
BEd (Primary), MIS(Librarianship)

Library Technician

Ms Rachel Patty
BA (Media, Film and TV Studies),
DipArts, DipEd, MInforStudies

Library Technician

Ms Amanda McAuliffe
BSc(Hons), GDipInfMgt

Library Assistant

Ms Tilly Askey

LMS Specialist

Ms Anita McMillan
BA, GradDipApSc (Lib&InforMan)

Manager of Collections

Ms Lorraine Thornquist
BA, DipEd, MA, CertIIIITourism,
GradCertMuseumSt

Manager, School History and Culture

Mrs Pauline Harvey-Short
BHMS, DipT(PE), MPhil, FACHPER,
FRLSS

Outdoor Education Assistant

Ms Gen Lee
CertIVOutdoorRecreation,
CertIVTrain&Assessment

Outdoor Education Assistant

Ms Seanna Wootton
CertIVOutdoorRecreation,
DipSport&Fitness

Outdoor Educator

Ms Clare Drabsch

Outdoor Educator

Ms Sydonny Fry
Bachelor of Outdoor Education

Outdoor Educator

Mr Andrew Read, BSustOutdoorEd
(Term 4)

Payroll Officer

Mrs Sharon Rose

Personal Assistant to Chief

Financial Officer

Ms Kirsti Moyle

Personal Assistant to Deputy

Principals

Ms Sally Condon

Photographer/Videographer

Mrs Kate Wilson
BTVSoundProd
(Term 2-)

Receptionist

Ms Melissa Taylor

Repairs and Maintenance Officer

Mr Robert Hetherington

Risk and Compliance Support Officer

Ms Shan Marshall
(Term 1)

Senior Librarian

Mrs Rosalie Stafford
DipTeach, BEd, MLI (Teacher-
Librarianship)

Sports Manager

Mr Liam Mulligan
BSpandExerciseSc(Hons), ASCA Cert,
AWF Cert, CertIVTrngAssmnt

Stores Officer

Mr Phillip Hopkins

Systems Administrator

Ms Maxine McCabe
BMus, MCommun

Systems and Network Administrator

Mr Kieren Anderson

Technical Support AV Specialist

Mr James Petterson
BMus

Visual Arts & Technologies Assistant

Ms Virginia (Ginnie) Dawson
CertIVEdSupport

Web Systems Analyst

Ms Subodha Dharmasiri
BSclT, BTEC(HND)







ADDRESSES

Girls Grammar formally farewells and celebrates the achievements of the Year 12 cohort at the annual Valedictory Dinner. The following day, at the Annual Speech Day and Distribution of Prizes, the School acknowledges the academic and co-curricular achievements of Grammar Girls across all Year levels.

CHAIR'S ADDRESS

THURSDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2023

MS JULIE MCKAY
CHAIR, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Ms Julie McKay, Chair, Board of Trustees, delivered the following address at the School's Annual Speech Day and Distribution of Prizes 2023.

Her Excellency, the Honourable Dr Jeanette Young AC PSM, Governor of Queensland.

Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk.

The Honourable Dame Quentin Bryce.

Councillor Vicki Howard.

My fellow Trustees—current and past.

Principal, Jacinda Euler Welsh.

Our incredible staff team.

Parents, family and friends.

Most importantly, girls.

I was at university 20 years ago when Dame Quentin Bryce was named Governor of Queensland; our first female Governor. Today, in the presence of our female Governor, female Premier and our former Governor General, I worry that it is easy to forget just how hard-fought women's access to leadership roles continues to be.

Our role as Trustees is to steward the School so that it can continue to offer the very best, well-rounded,

education. Over 148 years, BGGS has given girls a platform from which they can confidently take their place in the world and hopefully, continue to contribute as leaders in their chosen fields, and to gender equality. While we are enormously proud of the legacy of this School, it is like all things, imperfect, and we continue to seek to understand, learn from and where possible, make right, our failings.

When I thought about what 2023 would be remembered for, the launch of Chat GPT—technology that fundamentally changed the way our society sources information—cannot be overlooked. So, I decided to see what it would say, if asked it to write a 'three to five-minute graduation address for Brisbane Girls Grammar School.'

I am not going to lie—the outcome wasn't bad, and I was tempted to use it today to see if anyone noticed. But I thought you might see through the proposed closing line of 'wherever life plants you, bloom with grace.'

But then like all good Girls Grammar students, I went down a bit of a rabbit hole. Procrastination, after all, is a key life skill. What happens if you type in 'graduation address for Brisbane Boys Grammar School.' Turns out, the key messages are different.



Principal, Ms Jacinda Euler Wesh, The Honourable Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO, former Governor of Australia and Chair, Board of Trustees, Ms Julie McKay



Chair, Board of Trustees, Ms Julie McKay

Girls—you should focus on community, collaboration, self-confidence and perseverance.

Boys—they should focus on responsibility, continuous learning, adaptability and empathy.

The differences aren't dramatic, but they are there. Girls, collaborate, be patient, just be more confident and you will find your place in the world. Persevere. Boys, step up, take your place in the world, follow your education and be ready to change as the world changes around you.

For some of you, you will see these differences as nothing more than semantics. But the cumulative impact of the messages we send to the next generation matter—they have a massive impact on identity and empowerment.

2023 will also be remembered for our nation coming together to support the Matildas. For my entire life we have been told 'women aren't paid as much as men in sport because the viewership isn't there. The advertising spend isn't there. Women's sport isn't as tough, fast or interesting.'

Turns out, the crowds showed up. Every stadium at capacity. Every game breaking viewership records for sporting events nationally—and not just women's sporting records, all sporting records.

This group of women showed every Australian that being successful isn't about winning: it is about training hard, showing up and doing your best.

Just over 30 years ago, the Australian women's soccer team was invited to an International invitational. They hand-sewed their names onto hand-me-down jerseys from the men's team and ran bake sales to fundraise for their trip. It wasn't that long ago that women of equal potential didn't have the platform, the coaches, the opportunity that the Matildas have now.

Girls, each of you have a platform (your education), coaches (your family, friends, teachers and support staff) and opportunity. The hardest thing now is navigating what to do with it.

Everywhere we look there is heartbreak and uncertainty: conflicts in Gaza, Ukraine and Afghanistan; mental health concerns are spiking; we haven't found solutions for housing and aged care; and we can't adequately fund our health systems or disability care system.

But if you look—and sometimes you have to look hard—you can always find hope.

Someone using their platform and opportunity to make a difference.

The NGO workers who are still bravely working to get food into Gaza.

The women's rights NGOs in Afghanistan are still providing education and information to women-led households.

Taryn Brumfit is Australian of the Year, and actively challenging each of us to think about how we talk about and see our bodies.

First Nations leaders are working to redesign housing models in remote communities.

The Matildas have inspired a generation of young people to see women's success as equal to men's.

Disability advocates have challenged us all to think about what true inclusion of people with disability would look like.

Girls, your time at BGGS is not about guiding you to a particular career. A Grammar education is a platform from which you can take on the world. It is a platform that we are looking forward to extending to Years 5 and 6 girls in 2026. For a period of your life, we give you additional 'coaches', through your teachers, support staff, House structure and Co-curricular Program. You have opportunities to learn and explore in a safe environment; to build and rebuild friendships, to take chances and to fail. But beyond the picket fence, you have to find your own support crew, and it evolves over time.

Last week, I was walking through the Main Building with Ms Euler and we happened on Year 11 England who were practicing their farewell song for the year 12s. As they sang 'Slipping Through My Fingers', I was taken back to being in the Beanland Library as Year 11 England sang 'Wind Beneath My Wings' to us. The emotion of that moment—the sadness to be leaving a House Group of girls I genuinely adored, the pride as I saw the Year 11s stepping up into their leadership roles, the relief that exams were over, school was over, the excitement for the future, the butterflies (and being unclear whether they were nerves, excitement or terror)—came back to me in an instant. Twenty-three years later, that moment reminded me of the significance of this week for our Year 12 students, and for our whole School community.

Year 12 girls, I encourage you to look around. Pause, and reflect on the platform that is a Girls Grammar education and what that means to you. Take a moment to thank your 'coaches': your parents and loved ones who ferried you to every activity, made sure you ate, reminded you to sleep; your teachers; and of course your exceptional Principal who are all entirely dedicated to your success. I hope you feel excited about the opportunities that will come your way, that your journey ahead is filled with purpose, joy and an unwavering belief that you matter, and that you have the power to shape a future that is entirely yours.

'... the cumulative impact of the messages we send to the next generation matter—they have a massive impact on identity and empowerment.'

PRINCIPAL'S ADDRESS

THURSDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2023

MS JACINDA EULER WELSH

Principal, Ms Jacinda Euler Welsh, delivered the following address at the School's Annual Speech Day and Distribution of Prizes 2023.

Welcome

Your Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young PC ASM, Governor of Queensland; Premier of Queensland, Annastacia Palaszczuk; Julie McKay, Chair of the Board; Trustees—past and present; honoured guests, including The Honourable Dame Quentin Bryce, Councillor Vicki Howard, Guest Speaker, Marie-Louise Theile, President of the P&F, Dr Cate Campbell, Julie Caton, President of the Old Girls Association, staff, parents, Grammar girls and most particularly the young women of Year 12.

Here we are on this special day, to celebrate the achievements of our students, teachers and staff, acknowledge the support of our families and friends and honour all that this School represents—the education it provides.

I have your attention right now. And it is a gift.

'Attention is a finite resource. It is a precious one, too,' writes *The Atlantic's* Megan Garber. 'Everything—in a community, in a democracy, on a shared planet—will come down to what people choose to give their attention to, and what they choose to ignore. The hand is quicker than the eye, the truism of the magic act insists; the task before us is to see what we need to see, even in the daze' (Garber, M., 2023).

To what, and to whom, did we turn our attention this year?

- The Matildas inspired us, deservedly; we followed them with rapt attention.
- There were many others, on our social media accounts perhaps, who got much more attention than they are worthy of. The Beckhams might be listed in there, but to be fair many of us really enjoyed them!

Here at School

We immersed ourselves in this first full year of activities post-COVID. Every concert, sporting fixture, special celebration was, at last, delivered.

And the Junior School decision was a profound one. It has absorbed a great deal of our attention and represents the beginning of something exciting—both historic and new.

Chat GPT and AI burst forth into our awareness at the start of the year.

Something that has been anticipated for decades suddenly became very real. People wanted responses, quick answers, to guide our use of one of the most profound developments with, likely, some of the most far-reaching consequences of any new technology in our human history—thus far.

But while ChatGPT quickly captured our attention, we approached it with curiosity and were determined to be *responsive*, not *reactive*.

We understood that it definitely needed our considered and active attention in the long term ... but would not consume us or distract our attention from other very important things right now.

The Referendum absorbed our nation's attention.

And while few of our students were eligible to vote, I hope that the education they receive at Girls Grammar equips them to engage in informed dialogue on social, political and philosophical issues.

Our teachers educate our students to understand that their arguments may be challenged, their logic questioned and their opinions tested, but that the character of their conversation is as powerful and important as the content of that conversation.

Evidence of their ability to do this productively and respectfully led to some important discussions in the student forum, Educate and Empower, and in the School's commitment to our own Reconciliation Action Plan this year.

‘One needs more than brainpower. Among other things we also need humility, courage and a deep spirit of truthfulness.’

Gaita, R., 2014.

Globally, urgent attention has been directed to, tragically, the rise of war this year; we also see global issues being fiercely debated on our domestic doorstep.

This very week we have seen protests, marches and vigils—with worrying displays of antisemitism, islamophobia—that reveal how connected to the world beyond our own shores the citizens of our community are, as people desperately seek a way through.

Our students have the confidence and willingness to speak up for what they believe in and to, equally, be attentive to, and respectful of, the views of others. For so much in contemporary debate is polarising and divisive, and the young women graduating from Girls Grammar this year—and in the future—will help us to find ways to talk about our shared humanity in the times ahead. Lead our attention, increasingly, to that.

To return to Megan Garber, she notes that with the cascading information with which we are inundated, and the splintering of our attention we are, ironically, less able to meet the complex challenges of contemporary times.

‘Today’s news moves as a maelstrom [of] information’, she says, ‘at once trifling and historic, petty and grave, cajoling, demanding, funny, horrifying, uplifting, embarrassing, fleeting, loud ...’ (Garber, M., 2021).

The School’s Role

So what is the role of our School? It is not to tell our students what to think, but teach them how to think.

Philosopher Raimond Gaita says, ‘... the most important lesson I try to teach my students is just how hard it is to think seriously.

‘One needs more than brainpower. Among other things we also need humility, courage and a deep spirit of truthfulness’ (Gaita, R., 2014).

He speaks of the importance of art and literature—the humanities—to draw upon, as society seeks to develop a common understanding. And the value of ‘critical engagement with the past’ through history that ‘helps us to establish the kind of distance that is necessary...’, he says, to develop perspective, a timeless love of the world, when the future is unknown (Gaita, R., 2014).

But most important is our aim to live a decent life—to focus, above all, our attention on that. *That* is an utterly practical goal, Gaita says, and that to which people return in times of crisis.

The crisis you can’t control; the decent, good, life is yours to build.

PRINCIPAL'S ADDRESS

‘Being steadfast in our commitment to the ideals of our School gives us purpose and focus.’

Principal, Ms Jacinda Euler Welsh

Attention and Commitment

Our commitments, where we place our attention, reveal so much about what we value and prioritise.

Days like these remind us what we stand for, why we are here.

As a school dedicated to excellence in girls' education, it is important to acknowledge excellence in teaching, learning and academia.

To the students of Girls Grammar today, know that we respect and congratulate all of you who have worked hard, whether you are called to receive an award on this stage or not. For you have contributed to the learning environment of your classrooms, been a joy for your teachers to teach and known, personally,

the satisfaction of learning, developing your intellect and strengthening your character this year.

Being steadfast in our commitment to the ideals of our School gives us purpose and focus. It provides us, in this complex, demanding and, ultimately, fascinating world, with our direction. It doesn't just guide us on where to go, or what to do—it gives us permission to say no, let go, walk past sometimes.

For some things can be eroded when we are distracted.

Discernment and good judgement—that ultimately human capacity that AI, at this stage, has no hope of replicating—gives us the ability to sort the substantial from the spurious, and allows us to focus our attention on what truly matters.



Chair, Board of Trustees, Ms Julie McKay; Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young PC ASM, Governor of Queensland; Principal, Ms Jacinda Euler Welsh; Premier of Queensland, Annastacia Palaszczuk

I thank:

- the Trustees for their expert presence and wise counsel as stewards of our School
- Julie McKay, for her strong, effective and intuitive leadership as our greatly respected Chair
- our parents for their loyal support ... and your representative body, the Parents & Friends Association, for the P&F Association Bursary that has been awarded for the first time, to a bright and very happy future Grammar girl starting next year
- our staff for their expertise and dedication
 - professional staff who understand their roles are of fundamental importance in this collective endeavour we all so proud to be a part of
 - teachers who best know what good learning looks like, and who shape our learning culture with constant vigilance. They balance the 'hard' systems and data driven decision-making with gentle attention to the nuanced daily experiences so essential in the very 'human' identity of a school
- our girls for reminding us, every day, there is every reason for us to be optimistic and confident about the future.

The poet Mary Oliver wrote, 'Attention is the beginning of devotion' (Oliver, as cited in Foer, 2019).

As a School, we devote our attention and ourselves to our students, their education, and care for them as young people. I hope our Year 12 girls who are leaving us will devote their precious time, their attention to things and to people that are truly worthy of it. And know that what we bring our attention to, can powerfully shape our perspective, outlook on life and how we respond to it. There are great challenges, wrongdoings and injustice in our society but this does not invalidate all that is good, all who are good.

If only we brought more of our attention to that.

Thank you.

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HEAD GIRLS' ADDRESS

THURSDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2023

LOUISE CAMPBELL (12O) AND ANNA MCCAULEY (12R)

In their last formal address as Head Girls 2023, Louise Campbell and Anna McCauley delivered the following address at the School's Annual Speech Day and Distribution of Prizes 2023.

Good afternoon, Your Excellency, the Honourable Dr Jeanette Young AC PSM, Governor of Queensland, Premier, Annastacia Palaszczuk, Chair of the Board of Trustees, Ms Julie McKay, Principal, Ms Euler Welsh, Occasional Speaker, Ms Marie-Louise Theile, distinguished guests, family and friends of the School, staff, and students.

We are very grateful to Ms Theile for speaking to us today. You have given us insights into the world beyond the Girls Grammar picket fence and inspired us to think more broadly about how we can contribute.

John Donne was a priest and poet who lived in Elizabethan England. His world was unimaginably different to life here in Brisbane, Australia in 2023. Yet, exactly 400 years ago—in 1623—John Donne wrote words that strongly resonate with us today.

*No man is an island
Entire of itself;
Every man is a piece of the continent,
A part of the main;*

John Donne realised that although we are all individuals, we exist in relationship to each other. He knew that meaningful connection was essential to the wellbeing of a person and for the creation of a successful society. And 400 years later, at Brisbane Girls Grammar School, we also recognise and celebrate the importance of every member of our community. At Girls Grammar, each and every student is a crucial and celebrated part of the sisterhood and as individuals we are enriched by what we create together.

This year, your Student Representative Council has championed the importance of connection. We have purposefully tried to engage and motivate every single student to give their best. In our earliest discussions as new School leaders, we reflected on how our cohort could best generate this energy. We wanted a motto that would fire up the imagination and ignite the School with passion. We wanted a motto that would spread like wildfire. By the end of our Leadership Camp, we knew that in 2023, Girls Grammar was going to 'Embody the Blue; Blaze it Through'.

But what does this really mean? To 'Embody the Blue' means more than just wearing blue face paint on Blue Days. It means that each of us actively celebrates the history of Girls Grammar and the values it represents.

We wanted all students to really understand why our School was founded 148 years ago—to allow young women to contribute to the world confidently with wisdom, imagination and integrity. By acknowledging and celebrating our School's history of educating women of distinction we are motivated to dream and achieve.

This year we have revelled in learning more about our School with fun facts at Assembly. We have celebrated the traditions of Foundation Day, Blue Days, Galentine's Day and Bi-Grammar Events with passion and energy. In particular, we aimed to invigorate Blue Days as an inclusive celebration of our community and an opportunity to inspire each other to achieve our very best.

But it is not enough just to acknowledge our heritage. The second part of our motto expresses our desire to shape the future and translate our respect for our School into action. 'Blaze it Through' reflects our desire to create an atmosphere of energy and passion and kindle a new sense of School Spirit. School Spirit is difficult to define—but we believe it comes from conscious participation—although we can strive for our own personal success, being a Grammar Girl means that you are also always there to support each other.

2023 has seen the introduction of the True Blue initiative. True Blue is an incentive program that rewards students for supporting the activities of others. Students who attended three True Blue events each term were awarded a True Blue badge designed and made by Student Council. So far, in this year alone, over 600 badges have been awarded. The success of True Blue has been due to the generosity of Grammar Girls and their genuine desire to support one another. We think John Donne would have appreciated the active steps we have taken to build and strengthen our own small continent.

As we look back and reflect on our year as Head Girls we have realised that with 1500 students and over 200 members of staff, Girls Grammar is a bit like a cruise ship perched on the ridge of Victoria Park. At the helm, is our captain and Principal, Ms Euler, we are all grateful for the skill and expertise you bring to your role—you have charted a course for the School that has negotiated the obstacles and hazards of the modern world to find still waters in which we can all flourish.



‘Although we can strive for our own personal success, being a Grammar Girl means that you are also always there to support each other.’

You are more than a figure head—you are our role model. You unashamedly champion intellectual integrity and moral courage and encourage us not to be embarrassed by our talents and ambitions. We are energised by your optimism and your contagious confidence.

The crew of our ship are the teachers and staff whose efforts keep us all afloat. The most splendid classrooms in the world are worthless unless they are filled by caring teachers who can inspire curiosity, persistence and intellectual rigour. We are grateful for all you do for us and we realise that hand-in-hand with your qualifications is a passionate commitment to our wellbeing.

To the students of Grammar, our fellow passengers in 2023, we can’t thank you enough for your energy, enthusiasm and loyalty. You have constantly inspired us to try harder and work smarter. We know that you will show the same support to Aoife and Iha as your Head Girls in 2024.

For some of us, our journey is coming to an end and we are about to disembark. The Year 12 cohort will take special memories of the six years we have spent together. We have studied for exams, played sport and been in debates and plays and concerts together. Thank you for the confidence you have shown in us and for the support and encouragement you have given Student Council in 2023.

And to our parents and families, we know that this voyage may have left you feeling a little seasick at times but we hope that you have formed some precious memories along the way. We are grateful for the opportunity you have given us to be a part of this special community. Being at Girls Grammar truly has been as much about the journey as the destination.

It seems as though there is a history of nautical metaphors at School. In June 1927, then Principal, Miss Katherine Lilley wrote in the School magazine, ‘Our lives unknown and mysterious, lie before us. We are truly frail barks, setting out for an unknown harbour ... While at School we must remember that we are here to fit ourselves for the journey and to arm ourselves with knowledge that will help us to live worthier and more useful lives.’

2023 at Brisbane Girls Grammar School will be remembered as a year when spirit was valued over self-interest and enthusiasm was just as important as outcome. The energy and dedication exhibited by all members of our Grammar community has shown us the great things that can be achieved when we

Embody the Blue, Blaze it Through.

OCCASIONAL ADDRESS

THURSDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2023

MARIE-LOUISE THEILE (1982)

CREATIVE DIRECTOR, NEW INITIATIVE BRANDING AND COMMUNICATIONS AGENCY

Communications expert and former international journalist, Marie-Louise Theile (1982), delivered the following Occasional Address at the School's Annual Speech Day and Distribution of Prizes 2023.

Once upon a time ...

On a humid day in November 1982, I walked out of the gates of Brisbane Girls Grammar School for the last time and began the next stage of my life.

Imagine: I had no mobile phone, no computer, no internet, no e-commerce, no Snapchat, no Tik Tok, no Instagram, no Facebook, no Amazon, no Twitter, no Google, no Siri, no ChatGPT, no cloud, no streaming, no Google Maps—just a Refidex (that would be a hard-copy, bound book of road maps)—and a home phone which remained firmly attached to home. This was usually located in the most public area—think kitchen, on a wall connected by a spiral cord that, try as you may, could never reach as far as you needed to gain some form of privacy. Add to that thought: that the second house phone—usually located in your parents' bedroom—was often silently picked up during your calls by a sibling or parent hoping to listen in on your conversations.

I can already detect an element of wonderment from the students here today as they begin to imagine how grim that sounds while pondering the question as to how on earth my generation of friends managed to actually find, coordinate and communicate with each other. And I am guessing that while you contemplate and visualise that archaic existence of 1982, simultaneously you are assuming that I am about to subject you to a Speech Day rant about the 'good old days' and what a resilient, hardworking, generation we were.

Fear not: that is not where I am headed.

I am conscious as I stand here today that I speak to the students across a vast generational ocean, brimming with technological change, considerable ideological and sociological shifts, significant workplace changes, environmental changes, and ever-shifting global stability.

I also understand that since you can remember, reaching for your device for information, interaction, and connection has become second nature to you, as you navigate a litany of communication avenues with ease, daily.

I fully accept there has been enormous change, which is ongoing, but it is important to note the things that remain the same—and that is where my focus lies today.

What I speak of is valuing *individuality*—the key personal skills and choices that speak to the very heart of who you are and how you navigate life—in terms of the decisions you make, the friends you make, where you live and what you do.

These are life lessons that remain constant—through generation after generation—that will define you, guide you and ultimately provide an individualised framework from which to build your life.

Let's start with intuitive communication.

I am a firm believer in the vital importance of communication as the very foundation and key to seamless and productive pathways.

Having spent a large percentage of my time working in media, the often time-pressured process of distilling complex scenarios and events into meaningful, clear, packages of information honed my ability to be able to land on short, sharp messaging delivered in the intended way.

I stress *intended*, as so often it is this final step in the process where communications tend to break down—usually at the bewilderment of all parties who are equally confident that they have positioned and logically addressed the matter at hand.

I often find that the disconnect is the result of a lack of awareness and understanding that we are all wired differently—and that therefore successful interactions, whereby the recipient receives the message in the way you intended, depends not only on the information being delivered but also how you are perceived and how you make others feel.

Such interactions will present themselves everywhere in your life, from ordering a coffee, to communicating with your family, your friends, partner, and your work colleagues.

Where I am heading with this is to say that: despite AI and ChatGPT and all of those other social channels at your fingertips providing guidelines for pretty much everything, have you asked yourself if you are you aware of your individual and intuitive self?

More specifically: are you contemplating the intangibles?

For example:

We can ask ChatGPT: How to give a good speech?
And it will say:

Speak clearly, organise your speech, define your purpose. But what of your delivery, pace, tone, timing, your audience radar, and reading the room?

What of those intangible elements—the things you must figure out for yourself that sit at the heart of how we communicate?

It's our innate creativity that drives that: how we feel; how we monitor intuition; prioritise kindness; how we incorporate talents, and curiosity.

Sir John Hegarty—best known for his role in the global advertising industry for six decades—defines it succinctly. He says:

I think of it as an expression of self. It's your point of view. And therefore, creativity is about individuality.... It's what marks us out from the rest of the animal kingdom. Your dog doesn't wake up in the morning and ruminate on what hat to wear. Humans get up and think about things. Problems, solutions, idle thoughts. And that's what makes us creative.

Hegarty reasons that most of what you do stems from an ability to imagine something that isn't there, or that hasn't been done, and then perform an action.

He reminds us that you have something like 6000 ideas a day. Not all of them will change the world. But every so often, one of them will.

Therefore, don't underestimate your individuality—in advertising speak, it is your 'brand mark'. It is your point of difference.

Recognise it, and develop it, and be proud of it.

From an early age for me it was all about words and talking—in fact I was often scolded for talking in class—so much so that it always appeared on my report card with words to the effect that I could do so much better if I didn't talk so much. And to think, I ended up spending 20 years being paid to be a talking head!

It was obvious that storytelling was my strength—certainly not visual applications. I do remember at a very young age when everyone else was painting happy faces in bright primary colours, I chose black. All black, covering every corner of the butcher's paper, to the point the soggy artwork would hang, limp, on the easel, weighed down by the density of layered paint.

My teachers gently encouraged me to expand on this rather monochromatic, morbid genre, asking me what my art works conveyed. My response: 'it's a painting of me in the forest in the dark'.

My abstract imagination was clearly already at work, but would not manifest in a visual way.

Rather, I soon learned that creative writing, reading, and speaking were to be the foundations of my individuality.

In the words of former Apple CEO, Steve Jobs: 'the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it, keep looking. Don't settle.'

I landed on English and Journalism Majors for the sheer reasons that they were the subjects I loved, and subsequently was good at.

My career from there continued to track along the communications path.

Starting in the depths of Fortitude Valley, at the now defunct *Daily Sun*—a gritty Murdoch tabloid where many global News Corp heads found their feet in what was a somewhat seedy newsroom full of cigarette smoke, instant coffee, polystyrene cups doubling as ash trays, and a lot of inappropriate behaviour. It was a bastion of another era that would not have thrived today, for obvious reasons.

Next: *Elle Magazine* on Fifth Avenue New York in the heyday of the eighties—think *Devil Wears Prada*. The world of fashion media was exactly as you would imagine. I was young, and I was there because—despite the obvious processes of writing a letter and sending a CV—I backed myself to find my tribe and my city, and to take a risk based on what I knew I wanted, and what I could do.

Staying in NYC, I eventually moved back to daily news before returning to Australia to begin my television career. And then, just over decade ago, I began my third career establishing a creative communications agency.

Weaving through those 40-odd years in the workforce, the underlying common element was to maintain my individuality while at the same time developing other skills: resilience, determination, and the ability to utilise opportunities as they presented themselves. I was always adapting, learning, acknowledging others and absorbing information by being interested in people.

British author and neurologist, Dr Oliver Sacks, believed that through experience, education, art, and life, we teach our brains to become unique.

That we learn our own minds by finding out what we love; these models integrate into a sensibility; out of that sensibility arises the initial impulse for imitation, which, aided by the gradual acquisition of technical mastery, eventually ripens into original creation.

Ideas are in the air to be captured, he says. Find them, utilise them, but most importantly compound them, adapt them, incorporate them into what you do—and learn to express them in a new way that makes them your own. Mash it up! After all, in today's world everything is a remix.

OCCASIONAL ADDRESS

‘Trusting yourself is key, but also learn to accept and value help from your parents, mentors, friends, teachers and counsellors at school and beyond.’



Continue to question things, too—and don't take things at face value. I have a friend who proclaims herself to be a cynic. She says that she is so cynical she doubts the sincerity of other cynics.

Don't get me wrong, I am not advocating the benefits of cynicism. What my friend is actually very good at is critical thinking—the ability to look at something from multiple angles and find the facts and the truth, rather than adopt an ideological or philosophical position because someone else tells you to.

The recent Emmy Award-winning series *Ted Lasso* positions its protagonist as a metaphor for this very lesson. Says Ted:

People have underestimated me my entire life and for years I never understood why—it used to really bother me. Then one day I was driving my little boy to school, and I saw a quote 'Be curious, not judgmental.' So, those that used to belittle me, not a single one of them was curious. You know, they thought they had everything all figured out, so they judged everything, and they judged everyone. And I realised that their underestimating me—who I was had nothing to do with it.

Be curious—not judgemental

Life is full of social structures where perceptions develop rapidly. People are very easily influenced and quick to form often incorrect opinions about things and others. I speak of the pack mentality often whipped up very quickly, out of nowhere, and rarely in a way that is beneficial.

Thinking as a pack and not as an individual goes against the very grain of individuality.

Studies have shown that friendships are determined by how you make other people feel. People will remember and value kindness, humility, and compassion above everything else.

That is what determines likeability and friendship, not merely adhering to what others dictate or tell you to be.

Your interests and values will change and evolve during school life and beyond. Embrace that. Don't be afraid of change, mistakes, fragility, consequence, disillusionment; they are all pieces of the path to resilience, character building and growth. Trusting yourself is key, but also learn to accept and value help from your parents, mentors, friends, teachers and counsellors at school and beyond.

As I stand here today, I am reminded of the many milestones that we pass throughout our lives. Being young, there is always a sense of waiting, imagining, waiting; waiting for that next event to occur—for life to begin—knowing that it is coming, but still not sure of when and what 'it' will be.

Ultimately there are two questions you should continue to ask yourself, from now, about everything you do, everywhere you go, and everyone you meet.

1. Do I like this? Do I like this city, this activity, this group of friends, or this person?
2. Is it reciprocated? Does this give back? Does this city, this activity, this group of friends or this person make me feel good?

If the answer to either of these questions is 'no', then keep looking.

And then one day you will find that you are no longer waiting, but rather, living—no longer pinning your days to your next birthday, new job, the next holiday, the next achievement. You will discover that this is your life, and it is real.

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

WEDNESDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2023

SUSANNAH GEORGE (1999)
FOUNDER AND CEO, URBAN LIST

At the School's Annual Valedictory Dinner, alumna, Susannah George (1999), shared wisdom gained from her life and career in the world of technology start-ups.

One day, not so very long ago, a fresh faced, wide-eyed girl stepped through the Grammar gates. Her skirt was too long. Her bag: too heavy. Her hat: too crisp. (That only lasted a month.)

She was a girl with dreams. A girl with fears. A girl wondering if, and where, she'd belong. A girl who had outgrown her old world. A girl unsure and curious about the new. A girl with grit. A girl who wondered if she was enough.

Over the years, this girl transformed—she grew in height, in heart, in friends. She struggled and she succeeded. And she built a community that's really into royal blue ...

The world threw curve balls and she adapted—building resilience and agility. She made mistakes, she recovered. She was strong. She learned she has, and is, everything she needs.

Graduating class of 2023, look around and raise your hand if you see this girl in the room tonight ... Educators, special guests and parents, could I ask you to join us. Raise your hands if you see this girl—in here, in your daughter, or in you?

Ms Euler Welsh, Dr Cate Campbell, P&F President; Mrs Julie Caton, OGA President; teachers, parents and most importantly, the graduating class of 2023, thank you for opening your world to me tonight, and allowing me to share this special time with you.

Grammar girls, on Friday you'll be in uniform for the last time. You'll take a final trip up Gehrmann Lane, step through the gate and stand facing your future. The experience will feel new, exciting, uncertain. And here's the plot twist—there's a lot in that newness that you can rely on, that's familiar.

You've conquered new worlds before; you did so when you walked through Grammar's gates. You navigated the new, and you found your place.

You know change—immense change. No other generation has been asked to roll with the punches quite like you.

And you want to create change. No other generation has driven such substantive and positive cultural shifts.

Inclusion and equality are mandatories for you, as they should be for all. You're champions and you're committed. We could learn a lot from you.

You've made mistakes. Some have already learned the power in knowing there's no failure except failure to learn. Some haven't ventured that far yet. You will, in time.

You're walking into a world that's new, and yet, in a way, you've done this before. You've experienced the unknown, gone after dreams. You can trust yourself.

Learning to trust myself has been the gift of a lifetime. A gift I really, really wish I'd learned earlier on. I'm 42 now. It took me four decades to really get it. And this concept—trusting yourself—is the message I want to share with you tonight.

Each time I've crashed, it's because I stopped trusting. Each time I've soared it's because I began to believe in myself.

Let me share a little of my story so you can decide if you trust me telling you to trust yourself!

.....

My journey has not been linear. I was a boarder at Grammar, and I loved it. I worked hard, had a tonne of friends, and ticked most of the boxes. I was the first Grammar girl to do Year 11 and 12 across three years, and split my time studying at the Conservatorium and in the USA.

When I graduated in 1999, I had plans. *Big plans*. Things didn't really pan out that way ...

.....

I went from being a talented violinist who got straight As to quitting music and dropping out of four university degrees. Eventually, I was on the path to graduation. My parents breathed a huge sigh of relief.

With two months' notice, no friends, no job and and no French, I moved to Paris—before graduation day. My parents were not so thrilled. I spent three years living and working in France, and then moved on to Los Angeles.

‘The experience will feel new, exciting, uncertain. And here’s the plot twist—there’s a lot in that newness that you can rely on, that’s familiar.’

It was in LA that I first had the idea for Urban List, the digital media company I founded and run today.

I was 24 when I moved to LA, and this was the second time that I found myself in a big city without family or friends. Both were cities where it was easy to get lost, both literally and figuratively. I had no one to rely on to find my way around, and so I turned to the internet to do research, searching for good coffee, a friendly bar—places I might belong.

All I found were directories of user-generated reviews. No one was curating the city with tips they’d stand behind. I wanted a source that I could trust, to help me find a sense of place. And I thought if there was a gap for that in Los Angeles, there might be a gap everywhere.

Around the same time, social media had really started to gain pace. Facebook hadn’t launched their business product yet, but across the city there were small business owners setting up personal profiles, using social to attract and retain a customer base.

I’ve always been passionate about small business and the impact they have on our cities’ cultural scape. I was comparing and contrasting what was happening in the US vs Australia and was worried about what might happen if small businesses couldn’t keep pace.

I didn’t want to hand-hold mums and dads through setting up Facebook pages. I wanted to make a difference, and I wanted to do it at scale. And so, I came up with a concept that would connect like minds through the internet, channelling them out in support of small businesses I loved.

I pitched this idea to a few people I trusted, and no-one thought it had legs. I didn’t have the courage to swing for it, I didn’t trust myself, and I put it in the drawer.

Three years later, I still couldn’t get the idea out of my head. I finally hit a point where the risk of saying ‘what if’ was worse than the risk of failing. And I backed myself.

I moved home to Australia to give it a go, and launched Urban List from my bedroom one year later. It was a very DIY affair. No backers. No experience. Just a vision, a laptop and a willingness to put in the work.



I worked my guts out, my heart set on realising the dream. I was putting in 20-hour days until one morning, I woke up to a team member putting me in an ambulance. I’d collapsed from exhaustion and wound up with stitches in my forehead, a broken nose and smashed front teeth.

I kept plugging away. Most people I talked to didn’t believe it could scale. But I kept going, pushed through the doubt, and trusted myself.

In 2014, three years after launch, Urban List became the largest lifestyle guide in the country. Not bad for something most said was a terrible idea.

We expanded internationally, moving into four markets in four months. Our revenue and audience doubled. And so did our team. I was awarded Australian Media Woman of The Year. And I was pregnant with my son.

Everyone said things were flying. For me, it was all crashing down.

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

‘... lean into your power with the confidence of someone who has walked through new gates before.’

I'd lost all confidence in my ability to grow and lead the business; and the more I believed that, the more it was proven true.

That loss of confidence and trust in self hit me like a freight train. The business suffered. I did too. I had 100 per cent turnover of our Executive Team within four months of my daughter being born. Things slid to a point where I was moments away from losing it all.

Eventually, I asked for help. The support had always been there, but in the cloud, I couldn't see. It came from friends, from family and from experts. It also came from having the trust to reach out to those I didn't know, but whose values and experiences I respected, and as it turned out, they also respected me.

I rebuilt, and so did Urban List. We went from being on the edge to being named Australian Media Brand of The Year three times.

Today, we are one of the largest independent media companies in Asia Pacific. We serve 30 000 recommendations an hour to an audience of 3 million people across Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. Our clients are among the best-known brands in the world, our team is happy, high performing and just like me, believe culture matters.

The difference that made the difference was the courage to trust.

Trust myself. Trust others. Trust that I was, and am, enough.

Trust that I could and can ask for help. Trust that accepting it is not weakness, but strength. Trust that making mistakes is critical; and if I'm not making them I'm not living boldly enough!

I've rewritten a personal belief that my value—my loveability—was centred on my achievements. Now I trust that I am loved and valued, for who I am. I've learned to lead with my whole heart; and I choose that over being liked.

All of our experiences—mine and yours, the good and the ugly—are moments of teaching, or learning, and moments in which we have the power to build our own sense of trust.

As you head into the world on Friday, lean into your power with the confidence of someone who has walked through new gates before.

Sometimes finding the path that feels right takes time. And the path that's right for right now, is not always the same path for what comes next. That's OK too. Trust that in staying present, and in being open to fresh ideas and perspectives, the right path will light up and beckon you. You'll be ready.

Trust yourself. Live bravely.

And if you don't quite have the confidence yet, entertain this ...

To be brave, all you need to do is act as if you are brave. To trust yourself, all you need to do is act as if you do.

One day, you'll wake up and realise the act fell away long ago ... That acting as if, has now become *being* as if, *doing* as if ... because you are, and all along, you have been.

You have and are, everything you need. And you have a village behind you—parents, educators, friends, alumnae; a Grammar community who believes in you.





Graduating Grammar women, trust yourself. Be brave. I can't wait to see all you do!





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