Our Intent

Proud of our Grammar tradition
we are a secondary school
that establishes the educational foundation
for YOUNG WOMEN to contribute confidently
to their world with wisdom
imagination and integrity

Brisbane Girls Grammar School
2011 Annual Review
Welcome to the 2011 Annual Review of Brisbane Girls Grammar School. The 136th year of the School’s life has been characteristically diverse, vibrant and successful as the pages of this publication will confirm. To date Girls Grammar has enjoyed a rich history and the Board of Trustees remains committed to creating a school that builds on its strengths and tradition, while simultaneously leading as a contemporary learning community.

At Girls Grammar we pride ourselves on the scholarly pursuit of a broad range of teaching and learning initiatives. These span both the curricular studies and co-curricular activities that are pivotal to providing our young women with an insightful understanding of their world and the foundation to contribute to it with wisdom, imagination and integrity.

The School continued to achieve outstanding academic results, reflected in the Queensland Core Skills Test, OP and NAPLAN results for 2011. These outcomes are all the more remarkable given that the School does not offer academic scholarships and is academically non-selective in its major intake year.

Such achievements are only made possible by the dedication and inspiration of our wonderful staff under the exceptional leadership of Dr Amanda Bell, and I would particularly like to acknowledge the contribution of Deputy Principal Emerita, Miss Felicity Williams, who retired at the end of 2011 after a professional life dedicated to the education of young women.

Throughout the School’s history, the support of parents and friends has been vital to the continuous development and operation of our two campuses—Brisbane and Marrapatta. On behalf of the Board of Trustees I thank the parents, staff, students and friends of the School who have contributed so much in time, resources and support in 2011.

As we look forward to 2012 and the next iteration of our strategic design, I invite you to explore the challenges, successes and highlights of the past year. I expect that you will quickly see why we celebrate the inspirational environment of this marvellous School.

MS ELIZABETH JAMESON, CHAIR OF THE BOARD
The study and interest in philosophy seems to have undergone a renaissance in recent times. Derived from classical Greek and Latin, 'philosophy' translates as the love of wisdom. It would therefore seem appropriate that ideas of scholarship, education and learning should embrace philosophical thinking and a serious regard for the pursuit of knowledge.

In 2011, the School endorsed its new strategic aspiration to be a leader in exceptional scholarship—a seemingly simple, yet extremely challenging organisational ambition. It is not surprising that as the academic staff began to imagine programmes to achieve this aspiration, it became necessary to reflect on ‘scholarship’ and recommence from a philosophical position of questioning. What does it mean to be an exceptional teacher at Brisbane Girls Grammar School and how can we develop exceptional learners? From this premise, two exciting new projects evolved in 2011: the need to articulate a Philosophy of Teaching and the development of a new subject for Year 8 students—the Philosophy of Learning.

While external imperatives such as standardised national testing and the Australian Curriculum impact the School’s ability to be totally autonomous in its educational programming, as an independent Grammar school we are very fortunate to be able to remain flexible and respond to new theories, adapt concepts to our context and thereby deliver on our intent to give each of our students the educational foundation to approach the world with wisdom, imagination and integrity.

It is our autonomy in governance and leadership that provides us with the intellectual capacity, wide experience and specialised skill sets within our staff to have confidence in approaching our new strategic direction with an expectation of success. Brisbane Girls Grammar has a reputation for expertly balancing the tensions between deeply valuing learning for learning’s sake and a contemporary societal culture predicated on performance and credentialing. For this School to now re-assess the philosophical foundations for our teaching and learning is not only timely, but essential, if our young women are to have the very best education possible in 2012 and beyond.

DR AMANDA BELL
PRINCIPAL
GENERAL REPORT

For last year’s words belong to last year’s language
And next year’s words await another voice
For last year’s words belong to last year’s language
of 43x508

T. S. Eliot

And next year’s words await another voice

Deputy Principal

GENERAL REPORT

paradoxical demands from remote authorities. The speed
of technological change is, in fact, breathtaking. Because
schools are carefully constructed communities, and
relationships of people and ideas are at its beating heart,
effective management of change requires exceptional
sophistication and sensitivity. This is particularly so at an
institution like Brisbane Girls Grammar School which has
such a rich history and is loved and ‘owned’ by so many.

The year 2011 marked the end of the final phase of
the implementation of the 2008–2011 School Design. Central
to this iteration of the School’s strategy was the aspiration
to be respected internationally as a leader in the education of
young women and in professional teaching practice. This goal
helped us to be—or, rather, see ourselves as being—a school
whose strengths match those found beyond state and national
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new phase of planning. It was decided that the School’s
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for many years alongside Miss Elizabeth Hatton; they had the titles of ‘Senior Master’ and ‘Senior Mistress.’ The service they have
given to the School is stupendous and it has directly contributed to the School’s present position. Miss Hatton, old Grammar
girl, History and Physical Education teacher, lover of arts and
literature,Friday, 15 March 2013

In addition to the particular time in the School leading up to 2011 which has involved significant leadership succession
planning, there is, of course, the unrelenting reality of the force of rapid technological change and increased regulatory
demands over which the School has little control. Harnessing
people, learning, digital technology and contemporary learning
spaces in a context of intensifying compliance demands—
requires a high level of sophistication and maturity in the
application of organisational architecture and interpersonal
understanding—if the opportunity for regeneration as a source
of creativity is to be fully exploited. The challenge of being able
to diagnose, conceptualise, take prudent risks and implement
promising ideas—while tolerating high levels of uncertainty—is
a reality for educational leaders. Also required is a high degree
of understanding of emotional reality, not only of those people
involved directly, but of the organisation as a whole, as it is
evident that emotionality and rationality coexist in organisations.

The tension between the external and internal exigency to
move onwards, while ensuring the human need for the stability
required to do this is met, is yet another of the paradoxes with
which leaders, and indeed, parents and teachers, must live. An
understanding of this, and the capacity to manage co-existing
tensions, underpins organisational dynamics and growth of all
kinds. Ideas generation, growth in maturity, agility, judicious
risk-taking and facilitation of learning can only occur if the right
degree of normality and containment of the primitive fear of change is balanced with the appropriate degree of challenge to that status quo. This also needs to be clarity about how the change
represents continuity as well as discontinuity and an
understanding that letting go of old ways is not only a cognitive
but a sequential emotional process (Krantz, 2009).

The philosopher, Martin Heidegger, in his book Being and Time (1927), conceived of vision as a matter of recollection and
projection. He believed that we draw on memories of the past
to create a mental map of the future, which we then use to
orient our activity as we travel through the present (Rayner, 2005). In developing the Strategic Design 2012–2015, with
very experienced leaders preparing themselves for departure,
as well as those keen to new leadership, it was clear that an
heirloom of professional and cultural stewardship was being
passed on. Many decades of knowledge and wisdom acquired
through managing complexity and paradox of all kinds were
shared and are now embedded in the new School Design which
strongly articulates the School’s vision and purpose. This will
fulfil the School’s mission as it moves forward, with confidence,
imagination and integrity, in its aspiration to be a leader in
exceptional scholarship.

REFERENCES:
leadership. California: Corwin Press.
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

5/2/28-learning-and-insurgency-in-creative-organisations.

philosophyforchange.wordpress.com/

6

GENERAL REPORT

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And next year’s words await another voice
For last year’s words belong to last year’s language

T. S. Eliot

And next year’s words await another voice

Deputy Principal

From the Deputy Principal

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T. S. Eliot

And next year’s words await another voice

Deputy Principal

In a school, profound change and growth are not only
inevitable but essential. Students enter our gates and there
follows huge physical, intellectual, social and emotional
growth. Consequently, parents respond to their growing
daughters in ways that change as they mature. Our teachers
sign up for the kind of employment which is deeply complex
and essentially personal, in a time of ever-shifting and often
paradoxical demands from remote authorities. The speed
of technological change is, of course, breathtaking. Because
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6
Finance in focus

In its financial year ended 31 December 2011, the School continued to strengthen its balance sheet, and thoughtfully manage its expenses. The School achieved a surplus result this year.

In this climate of considerable economic volatility and significant uncertainty, we recognise the School’s responsibility to continue to find more efficient and effective ways of doing business. The School has streamlined several administration processes in 2011 including electronic BFT returns, electronic pay slips, online invoicing of parents, new improved online cash forecasting tool, upgraded our risk management and incident reporting systems and is in the process of implementing a new online payment system to assist parents in paying fees online on the School’s website.

The timeliness of receipts of tuition fee income remained fairly consistent with previous years with only a small number of non current debtor accounts remaining outstanding at year end.

The graph indicates that the surpluses have reduced from 2009 to 2011. This is mostly due to the fact that income has not been able to keep up with the rate of increases in expenses. This is due to two key factors: firstly, Government funding deflation is not keeping pace with increases in costs and secondly, this has put pressure on fee increases during a period of volatility in the economy. One of the main causes of above average increases in costs remains staffing costs. There is a war for talent in education and a number of unions have been successful in securing above average salary increases over a three-to-four year period. The other large expense that has increased excessively is technology costs.

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The School's financial resources were utilised as an enabler to improve efficiencies and thereby reduce overall running costs. This will be an ongoing project for 2012.

Surpluses are used to fund payments on capital loans, capital expenses, savings for large future capital project and savings for uncertain events. A reduction in surpluses will result in a reduction in available funding to spend on capital infrastructure projects in the future. To assist in ensuring that the School’s surpluses remain healthy the School has embarked on a project to improve efficiencies and thereby reduce overall running costs. This will be an ongoing project for 2012.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND FOCUS AREAS FOR 2011

The School’s financial resources were utilised as an enabler to achieve our Aspiration, to be respected internationally as a leader in education of young women and professional teaching practice. To follow is a brief summary of the financial results within each of the key financial categories.

SOURCES OF FUNDING

Graph A shows that the key sources of income for the School are:

- Tuition Fee Income—67%
- State and Commonwealth Government Funding—22%
- Other Income (including Indigenous assistance)

Both these income categories have a key reliance on enrolment numbers. The School was in the fortunate position of once again enjoying full enrolments in 2011 and has strong enrolment lists for the future.

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SUMMARY FINANCIAL RESULTS

The graph above compares the School’s financial results over the past three years.

The sources of funding were deployed to ensure the School was adequately resourced to provide our students with a high quality, contemporary and creative learning place as well as engaging outstanding staff to produce exceptional scholars.

The School’s operating expenses have been illustrated in Graph B. The core operating expenses have been highlighted below:

- Employee benefit expenses / staff costs—staff costs make up 65% of the School’s total operating expenses and ensure that the School maintains its record of employing exceptional teaching and support staff.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) technology remains a key focus for the School and made up 6% of the total expenses.
- Repairs and maintenance—the School is very proud of its excellently maintained campuses and has a rotational maintenance programme in place. Repairs and maintenance made up 5% of the total expenses.
- Depreciation and borrowing costs—depreciation of the School’s assets and borrowing costs through QTC (Queensland Treasury Corporation) funding large capital building projects made up 1% of the total expenses.
- Tuition costs—these costs fund the day-to-day student activities within and outside of the class room and include approved activities such as camps, co-curricular activities, excursions and visiting speakers. Tuition cost made up 4% of the total expenses.
- Surpluses are used to fund payments on capital loans, capital expenses, savings for large future capital project and savings for uncertain events.
- Minor plant & equipment—a large portion of the costs this year under minor plant and equipment were for the upgrade to projectors to improve connectivity in the class room and allow for wireless projections from a teacher or student tablet or computer. The total for minor plant and equipment made up 3% of the total expenses.
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The School would like to acknowledge the contributions made by the State and Commonwealth Governments in the form of grant allocations. The grants received and approved in 2011 included:

- Recurring State and Commonwealth Government Grants, including Indigenous assistance
- Commonwealth Grants — $3,495,887
- State Government Grants — $2,162,657
- Literacy, numeracy and special learning grants, including an ESL grant received from Commonwealth Government — $22,318
- Funding from the Queensland Government for VET Coordination and Career Enhancement — $ 2,206
- Queensland State Endowment grant provided to Grammar Schools in Queensland to assist with the additional compliance cost to comply with State Government legislation for Statutory Bodies — $21,500
- Commonwealth ICT Infrastructure Capital Assistance used to fund a portion of the wireless extension — $30,730
- Commonwealth Digital Education Revolution Grant used to fund student computers — $646,731
- Queensland Government National Partnerships Centre of Excellence grant — $15,500

MS COLETTE PRETORIUS

BUSINESS MANAGER
Sentiments such as that attributed to Einstein can be found in various contexts transcending both temporal and spatial boundaries. While the idea that education is the main inhibitor of the deep and meaningful critical thinking associated with learning has often been touted in a humorous manner it provides a reminder of the sometimes competitive demands currently faced by schools. An analysis of the themes dominating the work of those concerned with the education of children and adolescents, reveals an increased understanding of effective learning, as well as a preoccupation with the measurement of academic outcomes. Interestingly the former can be seen to be contrary to the latter in some contexts. To ensure the provision of excellent learning opportunities for all students it is imperative that this climate of educational paradox is acknowledged, managed and used in a positive way.

2011 has seen Brisbane Girls Grammar School engaged in the thinking, planning and programme development necessary to ensure the consistent growth of a culture of learning within the construct of a national agenda increasingly focused on quantification and uniformity. As expected, this commitment to ‘good learning’ can be seen in myriad elements of the School’s work throughout the year, some of which may appear purely administrative and some which are clearly rooted in educational philosophy. Essential to the quality of the education provided is the understanding that all spheres of the School’s operation, be they administrative, curricular or co-curricular, must stem from this common purpose. Thus the alterations to the reporting system, which were implemented this year, had as their impetus the enhancement of student learning. In the same way the development of a new subject, Philosophy of Learning, which will be delivered for the first time to the Year 8 cohort of 2012, reflects the School’s continually developing understanding of the conditions required to maximise the learning of each individual within the community.

The ideas and planning which have resulted in the design of the Philosophy of Learning subject are worthy of mention as they characterise the School’s focus throughout 2011. A review of the educational research currently dominating academia has allowed us to distil current thinking and enabled the creation of a foundational entry-level subject that will provide students with a platform from which to develop their capacity to learn. The core of this subject is the importance of improving the understanding of learning as a process honed by addressing its cognitive and behavioural dimensions (Bramford, 2000). Such an understanding is vital for both staff and students. Thus, our work this year has led to a programme that will address the needs of all members of the community.
The educational scholarship of the last decade, which informs the Philosophy of Learning subject, can be characterised by its focus on the psychological and physiological aspects of learning. Costa (2008) writes about the need for students to learn how to learn and of metacognition (p. 17). Educational psychologist Dweck outlines the importance of intellectual stretching, viewing challenge and persistence as keys to brain development (2006) and Martin in his book, Building Classroom Success (2010), deals with the need to address fear of failure and build academic courage. Professor Carol Dweck from Stanford University has carried out research focusing on the importance of mindset students bring to their learning (Blackwell, Trzesniewski & Dweck, 2007). She claims that individuals have an implicit theory of intelligence, which means that they view their intelligence as fixed or malleable. Dweck’s research has revealed that those students with a growth mindset, that is a belief that their intelligence is an expandable entity, experience greater success than those with a fixed view of their academic ability. Essentially this is because students who have the view that they can ‘grow their intelligence’ are more inclined to take academic risks and benefit from the challenges they encounter. They are also more inclined to demonstrate the resilience necessary to persevere when faced with failure. Particularly significant is Dweck’s assertion (2006) that a growth theory of intelligence can be taught, resulting in a subsequent change in a student’s mindset and behaviour. It is this premise that has guided the development of the School’s programmes throughout the year, ultimately resulting in the new learning subject.

The School’s leading outdoor education programmes are an example of the wider application of Dweck’s approach. Marrapatta has continued to provide a medium through which effective experiential learning and its associated behaviours can be promoted. All students from Years 8, 9 and 10 are involved in programmes which challenge their physical and emotional capacity, assisting them in the development of resilience and self-awareness. Engaging in the responsible risk taking which characterises the Marrapatta experience reinforces the importance of the cycle of challenge, failure and feedback which is implicit in good learning.

As well as Dweck’s work on mindset the School has also explored the recent research on the functioning of the brain. Arguably the most exciting development in the scholarship of learning to date, the notion of neuroplasticity, the ability of the brain to reorganize or rebuild itself through the formation of new neural pathways, appears to contradict the previously held belief that the brain is fixed with a defined capacity for learning that cannot be altered (Doidge, 2008). Educators such as Professor John Geake from the University of New England have begun to write about the importance of acknowledging and articulating these links between science and learning (2009). An understanding of neuroplasticity has reinforced the conviction that through persistent effort intellectual progress can be made and has allowed the School to provide its students with evidence to support an emphasis on effective learning behaviours.

The School proudly acknowledges the Year 12 cohort of 2011 whose results (as seen above) are testament to the importance of a research-based educational programme, which focuses on each individual’s capacity to make meaningful intellectual progress. These young women have embarked upon a life wide learning journey that will assist them to live meaningful and successful lives according to their own aspirations and choices.

MS SAMANTHA BOLTON
DEAN OF STUDIES

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### GTAC Offers 2011

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offers</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelor Degree</td>
<td>96.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>First and Second Preference</td>
<td>79.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First, Second or Third Preference</td>
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### Queensland Core Skills Test Results 2011

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<th>BGGS</th>
<th>State</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>43.4%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Result</th>
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<th>State</th>
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**REFERENCES:**


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**Exploiting the past to teach into the future**

Institutions such as Brisbane Girls Grammar School have much to reflect upon as each year, and each era, passes through its gates. Traditions that are born of long standing successes in the breadth of its endeavours shape not only our view of the past but provide some surety as to the road map for the institution’s future. However, traditions in society have seen schools often regarded as institutions like banks. Inside reside vaults of knowledge and wisdom, held tightly in the tomes in their libraries or more commonly in the minds of their teachers. The years of school are like standing on one side of a counter withdrawing an understanding of the workings of the world from those standing on the other. Our idiomatic view of the traditional school experience is of the transmission of learning from one to another.

Schools, as all other areas of society, are not immune to the pressures placed on traditions by the seemingly relentless creep of the information technology age. The ability to access more information faster, to engage in meaningful social interactions with others in ever broadening contexts and the ability to collaboratively create and curate knowledge have changed society’s expectations of schools. The three Rs, cherished as the building blocks of education in discourse for many years, have been now augmented by the ability to develop the skills required by today’s students for tomorrow’s knowledge economy.

The contemporary challenges of information technologies in schools have shifted from the physical concerns of access to computing devices or the internet to how best to leverage the hardware to facilitate effective learning. And, in many ways, the technologies are shifting our perspectives of what that learning should be. The impacts of social media on the lives of young people may be the subject of the societal values debate for some time to come, but the collaborative and networked culture it has bred has changed the expectations we have of knowledge acquisition. Grammar girls are bound by many of the School’s academic traditions, but are not bound by those that bind them to static knowledge in texts or to the expertise of a teacher standing before them in a classroom.
Brisbane Girls Grammar School’s commitment to a flexible and blended approach to information technologies on one hand promotes the focus on the pedagogies of technology rather than the technology itself and on the other positions the School to exploit the emergence of new platforms or paradigms. The investment in wireless infrastructure sees our students integrate information technology into their learning rather than take their learning to technologies. The Gehrmann Block teaching spaces, reconstructed for the 2011 academic year, embody this ethic, exemplifying 2010 Scholar in Residence Professor Erica McWilliam’s search for a return to the classical café culture—flexible and adaptable spaces that promote traditional communication and exchange in all of its forms (McWilliam, 2011).

In a similar vein the development of a structured online learning community, the School’s Moodle Learning Management System, provides students with a virtual learning environment within which students and teachers can authentically work together to explore and create shared understanding. These spaces allow students to connect information sources (Seimans, 2004); maintain control over the content (Drexler, 2010); promote a level of self-organisation that results in ‘organic and emergent structures that offer bottom up control rather than top down design’ (Samarawickrema, Benson, & Brack, 2010).

Rather than depersonalising the school experience for the current cohort of Grammar girls, virtual learning environments provide meaningful and authentic opportunities for girls to learn. Leaning heavily on the Socratic Method and the ethic of the Oxford tutorials, wiki, blog and forum spaces in the School’s online learning communities seek to strengthen the links between learning and teaching in schools by engaging students with the view that they are partners in learning. In that sense, they are breaking down the view that students receive their learning and instead position them as the co-creators of knowledge. Personalisation is also drawn from a Grammar girl’s ability to connect her own laptop, netbook, tablet or similar device into the School’s wireless network and take advantage of the proficiency they have built up over time with the device in their learning at School. In the School’s open spaces, in its library and in its classrooms, students individualise their learning with their own technology.

The challenges for Brisbane Girls Grammar School then remain well within the bounds of many of the School’s traditions. The challenge for teachers, to develop their students in the critical skills of analysis and evaluation, so they can exploit the best online information available and recognise the residual for what it is, breeds a wisdom and judicious engagement with the online world. More than ever the ability to communicate with substance and clarity is prized in all media and industry, and hence the necessity for teachers to shape and guide their students in this regard continues to hold true.

To be proud of the academic traditions of Brisbane Girls Grammar School is to be proud of the School’s ability to build confident young women who contribute to their world and its future.

MR TRENT DRIVER
DEAN OF ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

REFERENCES:


Embracing the Sisterhood

On 22 January 2011, twenty-six new and eager Student Council members came together for the first time. The Leadership Camp was a time for planning, a think-tank of ideas for the upcoming year. Led by the newly-elected Head Girls, Angelique Sweep and Lucinda Tonge, the Student Council set about brainstorming its plans for 2011. Over the course of the two-day camp, their motto slowly unfolded and took shape. Determined to articulate what was the School, and what ‘drive’ the School, the girls described that intangible but dynamic essence, identifiable due to their cultural understanding of the School, as the Grammar Force—the G-Force. At 2011 began, their challenge to all members of the School community was to ‘Feel the G-Force, be the G-Force, embrace the Sisterhood’.

Leadership can be described as a process of influence. All senior students, regardless of their positions in the School, take on the role of leadership as they seek to provide the School with guidance to influence the thinking, behaviour and development of others. In doing so each year, the Year 12 cohort places its own definitive stamp upon the School. This year in particular, the positive presence and strength of the student leadership team was largely felt by staff and students alike. Angelique Sweep and Lucinda Tonge, strongly supported by the Student Council, led with maturity, integrity, insight and energy. The senior cohort eagerly supported their positive and creative role models and embraced wholeheartedly their plans and challenges for the School. As a result, the Year 12 student body developed a strong, cohesive nature. Above all, there existed a sense of security and calm among the cohort, which was a perceptible force that permeated throughout the entire community. At the close of the year, it seems fitting to reflect on the strength and synergy of the 2011 student leaders.

Throughout the year staff, students and parents often commented on the excellent tone brought about by the coalition of these students and the School benefited from their effective working relationship. Such success should not be accepted as a coincidental happening. In 2011, the School demonstrated its visionary approach by appointing Mrs Pauline Harvey-Short to the role of Assistant Dean, a position that involved the overall co-ordination of the Year 12 cohort. Having Mrs Harvey-Short in this new role had a significant impact on the Year 12 students, coinciding with a time in their school lives that was filled with new leadership experiences. Mrs Harvey-Short was able to devote her focus totally to the Year 12 cohort. Her dedication and determination were exemplary and her energy and enthusiasm presented as palpable forces that motivated and inspired the girls. Her long association with and dedication to the Old Girls Association of the School enabled her to instill in the girls the importance of maintaining strong ties with the School and facilitating a smooth transition from current student to “old girl.”

Much research has been conducted into the effective working of social organisations and the area of leadership. McWilliam and Dawson (2008) have identified parallels between creative teams and the ‘flocking behaviour’ of social organisms. It is a well-documented fact that the flocking behaviour in geese allows the birds to fly higher and to cover longer distances than each bird is capable of performing alone. When flying in a ‘V’ formation, less effort is needed to fly because the geese in front create an uplift of air to help those behind. The lead is rotated so that there are occasional rest periods from the most demanding role. Honking encourages the flock to stay together and keep up. From this arrangement, all birds benefit individually while working harmoniously as a team. Teamwork means less work for each bird, allowing them to use their energy efficiently and effectively to achieve their goal. As seen with the Student Council, the most creative and effective outcomes from the students are likely to have been the result of teamwork, sharing of leadership, networking and effective communication. All members of the team played their part and mutually benefitted from this. Certainly, while reflecting on a most successful year, members of the Student Council stressed the importance of their relationships and the cohesive nature of the group. They noted the role that the School had played in providing the structure and organisation for them as leaders through regular Student Council meetings and the Year 12 Assembly programme while at the same time, allowing them the freedom to develop their individual qualities and freely express their ideas.

Through the identification of the motto for the year—Feel the G-Force, be the G-Force, embrace the Sisterhood—the girls provided themselves with a framework to focus upon a common goal. In their 2008 study, Roseth, Johnson and Johnson explored the concept of Social Independence Theory previously identified by Kurt Lewin who proposed that the essence of a group is the interdependence among members that results in the group being a dynamic whole. Group members are made interdependent through common goals. As members perceive their common goals, a state of tension arises that motivates movement towards the accomplishment of the goals. Positive social interdependence exists when there is a positive correlation among individuals’ goal attainments. Roseth et al. discovered that students who set cooperative goals with other members of the student body had more positive social relationships than those whose goals were driven by competition. Consequently, the more positive social relationships that resulted from goal sharing produced higher student engagement and achievement. Further studies have been conducted as to the impact of positive interdependence in engagement and achievement (Johnson & Johnson, 2006). These studies identified that positive interdependence has a greater effect than solely group membership or interpersonal interaction. There is evidence to suggest that when students understand that their performance affects the success of group mates, this creates ‘responsibility forces’ (Johnson & Johnson, 2009) that act to further increase their efforts to achieve. Therefore it is evident that the motto chosen by this cohort, their continual reference to it and their understanding of it, created for them an effective tool to achieve the trust and support of their peers.

An additional identifiable strength with the 2011 leadership team was the nature of the Head Girls. Student leaders who have been able to create the best results are often those students with strong, successful relationships in broad social networks (Burt, 2004). This is said to provide them with greater potential for communication across a wide range of people as was an aspect of Angelique’s and Lucinda’s social selves. Sociologist Ronald Burt has observed that individuals who act as ‘links’ or ‘bridges’ across previously unrelated groups, which he refers to as ‘structural holes’, have richer access to information than those individuals whose network structures are more limited. Burt states that these individuals with the capacity to transcend these groups are able to access a much greater diversity of information, knowledge and ideas. These individuals ‘are able to see early, are more broadly and translate information across groups and this in turn provides them with a vision of options otherwise unseen’ (Burt, 2004). People whose networks bridge the structural holes between groups have an advantage in detecting the tone and opinions of a community. With this knowledge they have a greater capacity to present initiatives or solutions to problems in large social settings. The 2011 Head Girls displayed these attributes to a level of excellence, which was a direct contributor to their success.

On reflection, the positive social tone of the School in 2011 can be directly attributed to the strength of these girls in leadership positions: their strong teamwork, their effective communication skills across a wide variety of groups and their ability to network and elicit respect and support from their peers. The benefits for the School in supporting senior students in their leadership roles are two-fold. Firstly, this continues to strengthen the student leadership structure. Secondly, the flow-on effect has resulted in a more participative, dynamic school culture. Throughout 2011, the G-Force has further strengthened the synergy that exists within the School community.

REFERENCES


Learning through the Co-curriculum

We can appreciate much more learning through being, doing, sensing, feeling, knowing and changing.

‘An individual’s life contains many parallel and interconnected journeys and experiences that individually and collectively contribute to the ongoing personal and professional development of the person’ (Jackson, 2011). In recognizing educational opportunities and acknowledging the value of participation in the co-curriculum at Brisbane Girls Grammar School, we can assist students to develop a deeper understanding of how they are learning in different parts of their lives. 2011 was a year of reflection and future planning for the co-curricular programme. Although many activities remained constant, a number of new opportunities were designed for students to ensure the co-curricular offerings remain current and future-oriented, especially with a view to embracing a Year 7 cohort in 2015. Through the co-curriculum, students can strengthen their connection with the School community, as affirmed in an Independent Schools Queensland Briefings article in 2011 stating that educators can substantially increase the connectedness of their students with the School by the provision of, among other things: service learning and community service projects; hands-on, experiential learning opportunities; ensuring course content is relevant to the lives of the students; using a wide-range of instructional methods and technologies; and extending the school day.

An education rich in creative arts maximises opportunities for learners to engage with innovative thinkers and leaders and to experience the arts both as audience members and as artists. Such an education is vital to students’ success as individuals and as members of society, emphasising not only creativity and innovation, but also the values of broad cultural understanding and social harmony that the arts can engender (MCEETYA and Cultural Ministers Council, 2007, p. 3).

Opportunities exist for students to engage in numerous creative arts opportunities, including instrumental and vocal music ensembles, drama productions, dance classes, art workshops, cafes and walks, and debating. In 2011, a Paul Jarman commissioned choral work, Kissin’, was premiered at the Gala Concert; twenty-three students travelled to Adelaide to participate in the Australian Combined Schools Music Festival; the Composer’s Club continued to expand, highlighted by competitions and the Aria Project; and Moving Opera once again provided a performance outlet for students interested in operatic repertoire. Two outstanding co-curricular drama productions, Busman and Iby Shambili and the Space Walk, were performed for capacity audiences in the newly refurbished Gehrmann Theatre; Felgates Drama Club and Grammar Dance provided creative performances; and the Drama staff led a tour to Sydney enabling students to participate in workshops at the National Institute of Dramatic Art and the Australian Theatre for Young People. The Visual Art Department conducted a most successful Desert Colours tour, providing opportunity for twenty students to create artworks in a our unique Central Australian landscape; and the 10.1 Debating team won the Queensland Debating Union (QDU) Grand Final.

Girls Grammar has a proud sporting heritage, having been a member of the Queensland Girls’ Secondary Schools Sport Association (QGSSSA) for one hundred and three years. The School continues to enjoy high student participation rates across nineteen competitive sports, and this year, in acknowledgement of the benefits of involvement in physical activity, the School expanded the non-competitive sporting offerings to include Zumba and general fitness classes. Art Kramer of the University of Illinois has found that simple aerobic exercise, such as walking forty-five minutes a day three times a week, aids the creation of new neurons in the region of the brain’s hippocampus that files away experiences and new knowledge and improves episodic memory. He states, ‘You can think of fitness training as changing the molecular and cellular building blocks that underlie many cognitive skills’ (Begley, 2011). A large focus for sport in 2011 was the development of coaching practices and the appointment of highly qualified and experienced Head Coaches to mentor and extend the younger less-experienced coaches. The School won twenty-one QGSSSA premierships in total with eight Club Sport premierships. Of pleasing note, the School attained first, second and third places in the QGSSSA core sports of Cross Country, Athletics and Swimming respectively, notably winning the QGSSSA Cross Country for the eighteenth consecutive year. In addition, our Fencers placed first in Foil, Epee and Sabre in the Australian National School Teams Championships, and the U14 Water Polo team won the gold medal at the Queensland Club State Championships. Four Junior Australian representatives and two Senior Australian representatives were selected from current students and recent alumni.

The Service programme continues to nurture an ethos of social responsibility and a positive sense of community in a well-supported and connected environment. Shields (2011) sees the school’s role in developing moral character as helping students become sensitive to moral considerations and gaining ‘the cognitive capacity to think deeply and clearly about moral issues and principles’. This capacity to reflect on moral issues is supported by the Year 10 Community Service programme and the increasing number of opportunities for authentic connections with those in need, particularly for students in Years 11 and 12. In 2011 almost $60,000 was raised for various charities. The start of the year focused on Queensland flood relief with fund-raising activities, a linen drive for the Country Women’s Association (QGSSSA) and a coffee stall for the Oasis Homeless Short Film Competition. The Service programme continues to expand, and this year, in acknowledgement of the importance of service learning and the role of service learning in enabling students to acquire certain life skills, attitudes and values that will assist them to develop their unique identity and spirit, thereby allowing them to contribute with confidence to an ever-changing society. With almost ninety-three per cent of girls engaged in co-curricular activities in 2011, the School continues to develop young women who can not only contribute confidently to society, but do so with wisdom, integrity and imagination.

REFERENCES:


We gratefully acknowledge the ongoing support of our alumni, parents, grandparents, staff and friends as we endeavour to provide the best possible educational environment for the young women of Brisbane Girls Grammar School, now and into the future.

Philanthropic Programmes

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The impressive academic results of 2011 have again positioned Brisbane Girls Grammar School as one of Australia’s leading education institutions. With forty three per cent of Year 12 students receiving a grade of A in the QSC Test, the scores for the School remain well above the State results.

In 2011 the Board of Trustees worked extensively with senior staff to further develop the School’s Strategic Design 2012-2015. The new aspiration statement of Brisbane Girls Grammar School is to be a leader in exceptional scholarship. This aspiration is a concise yet complex vision of the School’s commitment to the education of young women.

The School has been recognised for the sixth consecutive year as a national Employer of Choice for Women. There are less than 100 organisations nation-wide that have been endorsed for this award.

Recognition of Principal, Dr Amanda Bell, as an eminent education leader included her nomination by the Queensland Government’s Office for Women for acknowledgement in their 100 Years of Women’s Achievements tribute gallery.

Our teachers actively contributed to the advancement of the education sector and the perpetuation of the School’s enviable reputation for thought-leadership and innovation through extensive participation on various committees and panels and the delivery of keynote presentations at major conferences.

Art Nation, a TV show screened weekly on ABC, featured a segment on the Cherrell Hirst Creative Learning Centre for an episode on Australian architecture entitled The good, the bad and the ugly. The Art Nation critics examined each aspect of the building and declared it ‘one of their favourite public buildings and one of the best pieces of architecture in the last ten years’.

Director of Instrumental Music, Mark Sullivan, was the only secondary school teacher in Queensland awarded a National Excellence in teaching Award (NEiTA) and one of only ten winners nationally.

The immense and diverse accomplishments of individual students continue to shine beyond the classroom and sports field. Highlights include a Year 12 student being named as the Queensland Youth Ambassador for the Oaktree Foundation, the short film of a Year 8 student being a Tropfest Jr finalist, three Year 12 students being recognised with Order of Australia Student Citizenship Awards, a Year 9 student being appointed as Queensland’s Youth Ambassador for Health Research, and a Year 10 student participating in the Lord Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council.

Twenty students attended the Gifted and Talented Study Day along with 200 students from other Brisbane secondary schools. Discussion topics aimed to stretch the mind of participants by exploring concepts such as ‘What is evil?’ and the ‘Quirky world of quantum’.

Release of the landmark publication To Become Fine Sportswomen, by Pauline Harvey-Short, chronicling the 135-year history of health, physical education and sport at Brisbane Girls Grammar School.

The School continues to be recognised as a leader among its peers with the School hosting a significant number of visiting academics and education administrators throughout the year to observe our innovative programmes. Representing the breadth of the School’s reputation, the visiting professionals were from highly diverse education institutions including a number of interstate and international schools.

The School was again named one of Australia’s Best Employers for Women in the 2011 Best Employers survey, a recognition of the School’s ongoing commitment to gender equality and diversity in the workplace.

In 2011 the School continued to provide a range of extracurricular opportunities for students and staff to engage in the performing arts, visual arts, music, dance, drama, and sport. The School’s orchestra, choir, and band programs continued to perform at high levels, both internally and externally. The School’s Drama Centre was again home to a number of successful productions, including the Senior Drama production of Macbeth and the Junior Drama production of The Sound of Music.

Trial of Study Buddies programme kicked-off with more than thirty Year 11 students volunteering to support Year 8 and Year 9 students with organisational, time-management and study skills.

Health Studies Faculty received a School Partner Award from The University of Queensland’s School of Human Movement Studies for outstanding contribution to the Human Movement Studies Teacher Education Programme.

Head of Classroom Music, Andrew Pennay, was one of ten national winners of the prestigious National Awards for Excellence in School Music Education.

October Arts Week showcased the creative talents of all students including the Year 12 Art Graduation Exhibition, numerous musical performances, and the Junior Drama production of Ivy Shambit and the Sound Machine.

Almost sixty students participated in the Aspire project, which involved the recording of their own pop songs, culminating in a triple-CD and showcase concert. Original song writing competition attracted strong interest from students, with the two winning entries – Junior and Senior – played on ABC radio.

Recognition of Principal, Dr Amanda Bell, as an eminent education leader included her nomination by the Queensland Government’s Office for Women for acknowledgement in their 100 Years of Women’s Achievements tribute gallery.
HIGHLIGHTS

Junior students attended a wide range of outside school events including Women with Voices, Spring Hill Writers Festival, and Brisbane Writers Festival.

Marrapatta introduced an innovative Year 10 Outdoor Education programme which provided students more choice and ownership of their personal development journey. The Yabba Balance programme introduced a range of new outdoor pursuits which encouraged students to consider their life balance.

Year 11 student, Tanvi Karnik, gave a moving reading of Henry Lawson’s poem Scots of the Riviera at Gallipoli as part of the official Anzac Day commemorations. This opportunity was in recognition of Tanvi’s award winning essay on the topic of Gallipoli and the national identity in the 2010 Simpson’s Prize, a national history essay competition.

Historian and Visiting Scholar Dr Anna Clark delivered a range of presentations to Junior and Senior students on the issue of the construction and uses of history.

Brisbane Girls Grammar students were extremely successful in writing prize-winning essays for the Queensland History Teachers Association Competition. First prizes were secured for Year 11 Modern History, Year 12 Modern History, Year 11 Ancient History and Year 12 Ancient History.

Exceptional performances by Year 11 students at the UQ Economics Competition with twenty girls receiving Distinctions and eleven girls earning High Distinctions.

2011 saw the introduction of Spring Hill Young Writers, which is a trial writing workshop with a selection of Year 8 students from Brisbane Girls Grammar, Brisbane Grammar, St Joseph’s Gregory Terrace, and All Hallows’ School. The students met with published author, Brian Falkner, to produce collaborative writing pieces.

The Year 9 Interdependence Outdoor Education programme introduced Visual Diaries to enhance and support student learning. Operating in small groups, students recorded and documented their experiences using digital technologies which then provided authentic material for students to review their contributions.

The Year 10 Interdependence Outdoor Education programme introduced Visual Diaries to enhance and support student learning. Operating in small groups, students recorded and documented their experiences using digital technologies which then provided authentic material for students to review their contributions.

The Year 11 Technology students visited a local childcare centre to test and observe children playing with the interactive educational games they had developed for young learners. This innovative, team-oriented activity employed emerging technologies to produce curriculum with either a numeracy or literacy focus.

Innovative Mathapatta camp for high-achieving students and competition enthusiasts continued to refine and strengthen its outcomes for participants.

The application of GPS technology was imbedded across all Outdoor Education programming.

The Apollo Club, a reading group for senior students from Brisbane Girls Grammar School and Brisbane Grammar School, continued for its second year and provided a unique forum for robust discussion.

The appointment of Head Coaches in more sports to facilitate excellence in the delivery of best coaching practice. Brisbane Girls Grammar School is in the enviable position of having Olympic Gold Medalist, Naomi McCarthy, as Water Polo Co-ordinator and Head Coach. Angela Lambert, a triple Olympian and Gold medallist in Sydney, was Coordinator and Head Coach of the Hockey programme until going on maternity leave in Term III.

Our Fencers won all three competitions in the National Secondary Schools Teams Championships, defending their F/S title form 2010 and adding the Epee and Sabre in the inaugural competitions. Girls Grammar also won the Queensland State School Teams Championship for the fourth consecutive year and was the highest placed girls’ school in the Brisbane School Teams Competition, placing second.

Brisbane Girls Grammar School students continue to participate in Science subjects in much higher numbers than the national average. This success is partly attributed to the design of our own resources, which are tailored to meet the specific needs of our students. In 2011, the Science Faculty prepared for the introduction of the Australian Curriculum into Year 9 in 2012 with the development of customised faculty-produced materials.

Access to enrichment activities also contributed to our strong participation rates for Science. Highlight activities of 2011 included opportunities for students to visit the Seattle Biomedical Research Institute and the US Space and Rocket Centre in Alabama. Both programmes were physically and cognitively demanding and targeted leadership skills and team-based problem solving. Four Year 10 CSR students travelled to New Zealand to compete in the Junior Young Physicists Tournament while another two competed in the International Junior Science Olympiad in Durban, South Africa.

Guest lecturers included eminent representatives from Bond University and Keene Studios discussed the origin and direction of careers in digital gaming and multimedia.

Digital design showcase, Photograph the Impossible, attracted huge interest from students with hundreds of votes submitted to determine the “People’s Choice” winner.

Year 12 Technology students visited a local childcare centre to test and observe children playing with the interactive educational games they had developed for young learners. This innovative, team-oriented activity employed emerging technologies to produce curriculum with either a numeracy or literacy focus.

Outstanding results in the Queensland Girls Secondary Schools Sports Association (QGSSSA) competition including: first place in Cross Country, second place in Athletics, and third place in Swimming. The School won twenty premierships across all other QGSSSA competitions.

The application of GPS technology was imbedded across all Outdoor Education programming.
Insights

Unlike the industrial focus of education systems of previous centuries, contemporary schools are interested in teaching and learning programmes that are collaborative and engaging; less about content and more about judicious application of knowledge and understanding. They also want their students to be creative. Meanwhile, our schools expend considerable energy teaching young people about the importance of being curious in relation to their world; understanding, recognising and celebrating true creativity and scholarship; the importance to make judicious decisions and, amongst many other things, the value and the pitfalls of on-line information and social networking.

Dr Amanda Bell, Principal

Brisbane Girls Grammar School has always regarded service and responsibility as integral elements of a young woman’s education. It is important that every girl experiences some form of leadership while at school and is prepared for its responsibilities.

Mrs Pauline Harvey-Short, Assistant Dean

Assessment is but one part of the learning journey, a vital part, but not the most important. It is gauged as an indicator and a guide, students and their teachers can embark on a process of self-reflection and self-evaluation that enables students to look forward with positivity and not backwards with dissatisfaction.

Dr Ann Farley, Director of Differentiated Studies

To promote our students’ success in life we must provide a broad, balanced education that both ensures their mastery of basic academic skills but perhaps, more importantly, the skills for becoming responsible and ethical women.

Mrs Louise Harvey, Head of O’Connor House

Our new aspiration—Brisbane Girls Grammar School aspire to be a leader in exceptional scholarship—will be a catalyst for change as well as an anchor for quality initiatives. Its success will be reliant on our continuing culture and long tradition of optimism, enquiry and intellectual rigour. Our School does not have a strategic plan, rather it has a design. A design by definition is more than a plan; it is something which takes an idea or purpose and fashions it artfully into an innovative blueprint.

Mrs Elizabeth Jameson, Chair of the Board of Trustees

Our School Intent is about nurturing students in ‘wisdom, imagination and integrity’ and arts education embodies the development and layering of those very attributes. Young women in this School are encouraged not to lose sight of their role as standard-bearers for equality and equity, not only in the boardrooms, but across all industries including the arts.

Ms Lorraine Thornquist, Director of Creative Arts

If we are to help our young women to be the very best that they can be, we need to encourage time for deep listening, close observation and reflection. With heightened perception, comes a better quality of self-knowledge. With greater clarity of vision, the recognition of others’ viewpoints, and the honesty of one’s self-knowledge, our level of insight will deepen and relationships improve.

Dr Kay Kimber, Director of the Centre for Professional Practice

It is not enough to seek achievement in the successes of this life. To do only that denies us the benefit of the sense of achievement that comes from trying. Every success is preceded by a conscious decision to enter ‘the arena’. Each of these decisions is accompanied by risk and, with every risk, the possibility of failure. The benefit of the risk is found in what we take away from the experience, successful or otherwise. Set lofty goals, strive valiantly to achieve them and spend yourselves in a worthy cause along the way. You will know successes and failures in your attempts and your learning will have its foundations in both.

Mr Jim Seoha, Director of Post Secondary Planning

The complexity of today’s world with its quickened pace, new encouragements, multiple information sources and diverse opportunities perhaps necessitates that young people demonstrate more sophisticated judgment than was required in the past. If they are to adapt successfully and make the most of their circumstances, then their capacity to call on their inner abilities and to apply sound judgement is fundamental. At Girls Grammar, I am always heartened by what the students can accomplish, given the opportunity and freedom to take initiative. Developing this inner confidence and the capacity to judge things for themselves is a key element in our shared goal of allowing the girls to thrive.

Mr James McIntosh, Director Marrapatta Memorial Outdoor Education Centre

Our families are crucial and precious. The best emotional and educational outcomes are possible for our students when family and school work together. It is hard to think of any institution more deserving than the family.

Ms Karen Bebin, School Counsellor

The goal of schools such as Girls Grammar is to teach girls to be the driver, not the passenger, in their lives. We want them to be the arbiters of their own fate, rather than limiting their life choices based on their gender.

Mr Trent Driver, Dean of Academic Development

Reflection at all levels: personal, professional, across Year levels and within the House, intellectual, academic, social and emotional, is ultimately focused on the idea of hope and the process of renewal. It is important to take time to read well, listen to music you enjoy and connect with family and friends. Reflection builds resilience and encourages a mindset that is open to learning and positive thinking.

Mrs Ruth Jans, Head of Mackay House

As the girls move towards their eighteenth birthdays and take on the full mantle of adult responsibility, we encourage them to live by the old-fashioned idea of being a person of good character whose word and deed can be trusted, who is respectful, whose general intent is fairness and thoughtfulness towards others.

Mrs Marise McCorquhey, Deputy Principal

With the quality of ICT infrastructure and the extensive systems that interface this technology with teaching and learning, it is evident that from the top down there is an emphasis at Brisbane Girls Grammar School on ICT as an authentic enabler of quality educational outcomes.

Mr Kent Walker, ICT Director

Each girl is encouraged to test the boundaries of her creative and intellectual potential, each to experience authentic personal fulfillment.

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Listeners have very specific needs, quite different from those of readers. It is the job of writers and speakers to anticipate these, in the true, dual sense of this word. This principle is fundamental to the way we do English, because learning to assess and accommodate the needs of an audience is integral to successful communication. As a skill, it has obvious educational, career, and social benefits.

Mr Stephen Woods, Director of English

When looking to help people learn, it is often useful to work together—everyone leading, everyone following—and when this is done within a team context, the environment is created wherein individuals are able to achieve great things, all the while being supported by others. It is about acknowledging strengths and weaknesses, and understanding that within a team there are ‘superstars’, ‘mid-level players’, and ‘role players’ but that these labels are fluid. They change, depending on the situation, and sometimes (importantly) from moment to moment within a situation.

Mr Stephen Fogarty, Director of Health Studies

The Humanities Faculty is mindful of the need to balance relevance and immediacy with an appreciation of knowledge for its own sake. Ultimately, the most significant legacy for our humanities students relates to their understanding of the humanity they share with others regardless of time and place.

Miss Alison Dare, Director of Humanities

Students are encouraged to balance the ‘need’ to fill every moment with connectedness and information processing with reading for pleasure. Parents and teachers have a role here to suggest a range of reading that challenges, enlightens, entertains, and expands their horizons.

Mrs Krystine Cooke, Director of Information Services

Artistry is the highest level of performance possible and a truly artistic performance is exhilarating and rewarding for performer and audience alike. It can only be achieved by individual and group dedication to one hundred percent performance and to the stylistic demands of the music.

Mr Mark Sullivan, Director of Instrumental Music

As a speaker of another language I know that there is so much more to learning a language than just translating random words and pieces of text. There is the beauty that is inherent in poetry and stories from other cultures. That beauty is often lost in the translation. That beauty is only available to those who take the time and effort to learn the language and, in turn, learn about others.

Ms Natalie Smith, Director of International Studies

Compassion and helping out your mates is certainly central to the ‘Aussie Spirit’, and you need look no further than the overwhelming public response to the Brisbane floods for evidence of that. You would also find evidence in the extraordinary tradition of fundraising and community service among the students at Brisbane Girls Grammar School.

Mr Gregory Bland, Director of Mathematics

The Science Faculty offers many experiential learning opportunities and we believe that educational travel, such as the US Space Trip, is a life—changing experience for students. Expanding their horizons through school—initiated educational travel can produce a tremendous appetite for learning as students seek to better understand the world they share.

Dr Sally Stephens, Director of Science

Increased levels of self-esteem and physical activity are strong incentives to promote the need for girls to have sportswomen as role models. Additional value is evident when we consider the lessons girls learn when playing sport; the structure, competition and commitment required prepares young women for the demanding environment of the working world. Girls who play sport also discover the complex nature of getting along, strategising, and learning from mistakes.

Ms Sally Northcroft, Director of Sport

Say no to your children, regularly. Action speaks louder than words so follow up with consequences. Teenagers understand action.

Mrs Lyn Craskravory, Head of Beanland House

Our students are taught the importance of assisting others, the value of making considered decisions and taking responsibility for one’s actions, alongside the notion of always trying to do one’s best.

Mrs Emma Lowry, Head of England House

A Brisbane Girls Grammar School education begins as we help each girl to realise her potential academically and to develop her talents in many co-curricular areas. But to focus on these areas only is to miss the depth of what a good education is. An integral part of the education offered at Girls Grammar is to develop the depth of each girl’s character.

Mrs Hazel Boltman, Head of Gibson House

With our Grammar girls, it is a very rare problem to encounter ‘under-thinking’. Conversely, the trouble for some is actually ‘over-thinking’, which can increase their levels of anxiety. In our classrooms, in our House groups, and in all our co-curricular activities, we try so hard to help our girls to reduce anxiety, increase persistence, courage and self-belief and, ultimately, to achieve their full personal potential.

Ms Jan O’Sullivan, Head of Griffith House

For most students, the transition to secondary school may coincide with their transition into adolescence. They have to adjust to some profound changes—physical, social, emotional and intellectual. Young adolescents are growing in independence and gaining experience in decision—making. Their peer relationships become important but they are also seeking deeper relationships with adults, developing personal values and beginning to search for meaning in life.

Mrs Sybil Edwards, Head of Lilley House

Despite its biological and physical necessity, sleep is often low on our list of priorities. We all know that eating nutritious food and exercising regularly is essential for the maintenance of good health, but bedtime too often gets ignored. Sleep researchers insist that a good night’s sleep is crucially important, while the anecdotal information we gather from the girls here at school suggests that this is a point worth reiterating.

Mrs Violet Ross, Head of Woolcock House

Fundamentally, learning within an institution, as in home, is social and interactive. It is experimental and often the derivative of conversation, interaction, demonstration and response, much like the medium of social networking. Social networking is about active as opposed to passive consumption whereby users, including students, search for information to consume rather than relying on information provided by forms of passive media. This is the generation of user-generated content.

Mr Shane Skillen, Co-Director of Technology Studies

Rapid advances in the scalability, availability and processing power of computer technology have enabled the Technology Studies Faculty to take advantage of greater opportunities for teaching and learning. Mobile devices, open source software, social networking, networked learning, and faster broadband connections continue to enhance the technology curriculum.

Mr Brendan Thomas, Co-Director of Technology Studies
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Dr Amanda Bell, Principal of Brisbane Girls Grammar School; Dr Judith Hancock, immediate past Principal;
Miss Felicity Williams, Deputy Principal Emerita; distinguished guests including past Trustees, parents and friends,
one and all; staff and students, most particularly our prize-winners and graduating Year 12 students—welcome to
the 136th Brisbane Girls Grammar School Speech Day and Distribution of Prizes.

“Curiouser and curiouser!” cried Alice (she was so much surprised, that for the moment she quite forgot how to
speak good English). “Now I’m opening out like the largest telescope that ever was! Good-bye, feet!” (for when she looked
down at her feet they seemed to be almost out of sight, they were getting so far off.)¹

Curiouser indeed! If only Alice had heeded the well-worn proverb “curiosity killed the cat!” and resisted the desire to
explore, in a deeply judicious manner, every facet of the world in which they live. It was developed with input from
staff right across the many communities of interest in the School, building on the many ways in which Professor
Erica McWilliam, as inaugural Scholar-in-Residence in 2010, stretched our teaching staff to examine their own
teaching practices for improved student learning, and
stretched the Board to examine the implications for its stewardship of the School.

Irrespective of the obvious agility and legendary nine lives of the cat, the said well-worn proverb warns that even for
the cat, ‘curiosity’ can only ever end badly as it inevitably leads to the exploration of the unknown and the dangerous.

Fortunately, I would contend, the many generations of boards, principals, teachers, and families who have been part of the
community of this great School have never heeded the warning. On the contrary, our inheritance includes a deeply ingrained philosophy that curiosity can only ever
end well—leading to greater scholarship and discovery, greater leadership, greater citizenship and, ultimately,
a stronger, better community.

Curiosity, no less, is the very foundation stone on which to build a useful and meaningful life as a positively contributing member of society.

With this inheritance in mind, it was with great enthusiasm that the Board this year embraced a new guiding Aspiration Statement that puts curiosity and learning squarely at the centre of our thinking.

Our new Aspiration is that:
Brisbane Girls Grammar School aspires to be a leader in our girls:

“Exceptional scholarship”—a concept that goes straight to the heart of our much prized Grammar School heritage;
relishing the joy of learning and of being a scholar, but in doing so recognising what it is to be ‘exceptional’, celebrating
the differences—the uniqueness of each and every scholar, and their learning experience.

This Aspiration is beautiful in its simplicity. To the Board it is inspiring in its alignment to our School’s unfailing commitment over 136 years to encourage our students to
build a useful and meaningful life as a positively contributing member of society.

It was developed with input from staff right across the many communities of interest in the School, building on the many ways in which Professor Erica McWilliam, as inaugural Scholar-in-Residence in 2010, stretched our teaching staff to examine their own teaching practices for improved student learning, and
stretched the Board to examine the implications for its stewardship of the School.

Coupled with this new Aspiration for the School, and after much judicious consideration, the Board agreed to re-commit to the existing Statement of Intent, which still expresses clearly and appropriately our fundamental commitment to our girls:

“Exceptional scholarship”—a concept that goes straight to the heart of our much prized Grammar School heritage;
relishing the joy of learning and of being a scholar, but in doing so recognising what it is to be ‘exceptional’, celebrating
the differences—the uniqueness of each and every scholar, and their learning experience.

Our new Aspiration is that:
Brisbane Girls Grammar School aspires to be a leader in our girls:

Proud of our Grammar tradition, we are a secondary school
that establishes the educational foundation for young women
to contribute confidently to their world with wisdom,
imagination and integrity.

NOTES:
Lewis_Carroll Retrieved 17 November, 2011

Of course, before embracing these Statements of Aspiration (for the School) and Intent (for our girls), the Board required the Principal to account for the delivery of the previously endorsed Strategic Design. That in itself was eye-opening, to recall the enormous number of improvements and changes not merely tolerated, but positively embraced, by Dr Bell and her exceptional staff over recent years in the interests always of ensuring the highest possible educational experience for our girls. Most of these improvements are set out in past annual reports and regular communications to the School community, and include improvements in technology supporting the teaching staff and in the delivery of education, the careful maintenance and development of our facilities and resources, and the strengthening of relationships with our core stakeholders, particularly our Grammar families.

Some major strategies continue on from the previous Strategic Design, including the revision of the School’s site master plan and the introduction of Year 7. Whilst we have been committed to this latter strategy for well over five years, the timing of its introduction could only finally be determined by the Board this year as the state government finally announced its position on the transition of Year 7 to high school in the state system. Accordingly we have now reaffirmed our original commitment to the introduction of Year 7 in 2015. As we speak we are scurrying down metaphorical rabbit holes with ‘Alice-like’ zeal exploring the options for securing some of the available limited government funding to assist with the introduction of Year 7 as our new single intake year so as to ensure, as always, the best facilities and resources for our new year group and a smooth
I should say something of the more pragmatic part of the Board’s work this year. I have said many times before that it is a great privilege to serve the Girls Grammar community as a Trustee of the School. With that privilege comes significant responsibility for making often difficult decisions, judiciously, and for the continued long-term life and health of the School. Your Board has actively endeavoured to be mindful of that responsibility, to be accessible to the School community, and to keep you well informed of our more significant financial and other governance decisions, and the reasons for them, through our many communication channels. We hope that we have achieved our intent in that regard.

I speak on behalf of all of the members of the board—Adjunct Professor, Dr Mary Mahoney; Mr Tony Young, Professor John Hay; Mr David Vann, Mrs Margaret Huth and Ms Gillian Adams—when I pay particular tribute to the professionalism and tireless good cheer of our Board Secretary and Business Manager, Ms Colette Pretorius, particularly in the face of the rising tide of onerous and costly government compliance requirements—a veritable ‘caucus race’ of compliance, Alice might say—with which all eight Grammar Schools are presently grappling.

Dr Bell, to you and to all of your exceptional staff, an enormous thanks. We hear over and over from returning generations of past students, that the deepest affection and gratitude is always reserved for the many teachers who have shaped, influenced, even changed their lives. That is not to be under-estimated. The role that Dr Bell and her senior staff play is sometimes less visible and less well understood.

Creating the environment in which these exceptional teachers, and staff generally, thrive is that for which we owe an endless debt of gratitude to you, and your senior staff, Dr Bell, as you reach the ten-year mark in your leadership of the School. Ten years, and still brimming with ideas and with enthusiasm for BGGS, its staff and its girls.

Speaking then of our girls, I turn finally to our Year 12s. I realise that it was not at the instigation of a talking rabbit with a pocket watch, but I hope you are glad that you felt the pull of the G-Force as you slid down the BGGS rabbit hole in 2007, albeit that you possibly went in to a bit of free fall until you hit the bottom and found your feet. I hope that you drank of the BGGS elixir and at times here you felt ten feet tall, although no doubt sometimes you felt two inches high, but you surely got ‘curiouser and curiouser’ about the world around you at the goading of your teachers. I suspect you sometimes felt that you were in your own mad-hatter’s tea party, or ran the odd Dodo’s caucus race around and around in an endless circle, especially around exam time. But for all of the mad hatters, march hares and mock turtles that made their way in to your world at BGGS I hope you are glad that you felt the pull of the G-Force as you slid down the BGGS rabbit hole in 2007, albeit that you possibly went in to a bit of free fall until you hit the bottom and found your feet. I hope that you drank of the BGGS elixir and at times here you felt ten feet tall, although no doubt sometimes you felt two inches high, but you surely got ‘curiouser and curiouser’ about the world around you at the goading of your teachers. I suspect you sometimes felt that you were in your own mad-hatter’s tea party, or ran the odd Dodo’s caucus race around and around in an endless circle, especially around exam time. But for all of the mad hatters, march hares and mock turtles that made their way in to your world at BGGS I hope you are glad that you felt the pull of the G-Force as you slid down the BGGS rabbit hole in 2007, albeit that you possibly went in to a bit of free fall until you hit the bottom and found your feet. I hope that you drank of the BGGS elixir and at times here you felt ten feet tall, although no doubt sometimes you felt two inches high, but you surely got ‘curiouser and curiouser’ about the world around you at the goading of your teachers. I suspect you sometimes felt that you were in your own mad-hatter’s tea party, or ran the odd Dodo’s caucus race around and around in an endless circle, especially around exam time. But for all of the mad hatters, march hares and mock turtles that made their way in to your world at BGGS I

The Board of Trustees have provided significant support for the senior staff during the strategic planning process and throughout this year generally—I thank them sincerely for their wisdom and vision. I pay tribute to my senior colleagues and talented staff for their intellectual leadership, engagement, energy and commitment for the benefit of our students. On behalf of the School I extend gratitude to our parents, volunteers and old girls for working with us to ensure the girls are given the best opportunities to meet the challenges of each day and their future.

Last year—the School’s 135th year—was a time of strategic reflection and renewal. This year, we have confirmed our new aspiration: to be a leader in exceptional scholarship. In the recent edition of the Grammar Gazette, the senior staff elaborated on the evolution of our aspiration and the important concepts embedded in our new Strategic Design. Their essay positioned the inherent challenges therein within the context of tradition and the contemporary dynamics of educational theory. Planning is at the forefront of our thinking as we approach 2015 when the School will expand to embrace Year 7 as part of our secondary environment. Committees auditing curriculum offerings, student care programmes and potential co-curricular activities have commenced their research—specifically for the introduction of Year 7, but also with a view to revising the matrix of opportunities across all grades and within the context of the new Australian Curriculum.

Ms Elizabeth Jameson, Chair of the Board; Trustees; Miss Felicity Williams, Deputy Principal Emerita; Dr Judith Hancock, Past Principal; special guests, staff, parents and girls...

SPEECH DAY ADDRESS THURSDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2011

Principal

Ms Elizabeth Jameson, Chair of the Board; Trustees; Miss Felicity Williams, Deputy Principal Emerita; Dr Judith Hancock, Past Principal; special guests, staff, parents and girls...
Girls Grammar has a very distinctive culture, and it is through Mrs Harvey-Short’s recent publication on our sportswomen—that perpetuate a deep understanding of stories—as seen so poignantly through Mr Dale’s greatest strength lies in his unlimited compassion for those in great need—a character trait that came to the fore when he comforted a distraught School community after the tragic bus accident of 1979.

Mr Dale has consistently supported the School and personifies all it represents. He is a friend to many and admired by all. The Dean of School role—devised particularly for Mr Dale—is wide-ranging and all-encompassing, not unlike his generosity of spirit and intellect. The Board, senior management and staff thank him on behalf of our extended community, past and present. As the Head Girls present Mr Dale with a small token of our appreciation, please join me in thanking him for his significant contributions to education and for bringing such a tremendous friend to this School.

How many friends does one need in order to live well? This self-regulation amongst gamers, YouTube ‘reality checked’ content and the forums ban on those who practice anonymity; flame wars, the notion of an emerging collaborative consumption goes beyond this self-regulation and places its foundation in inherent trust: Botman believes that “technology creates the social glue for trust to form between strangers” (Solon, 2011). If the collaborative consumer relationship further develops between strangers it moves towards a new type of friendship where the gap is bridged between good intention and action.

An example is TaskRabbit—as opposed to the White Rabbit. TaskRabbit is an American website that ‘gets you in touch with friendly, reliable people who can help you get just about anything you need done, and put some free time back into your life.’ Sounds perfect to time-poor people in a busy, modern world isn’t it? It’s an online, mobile two-way market place which helps people—known as TaskPosters—live smarter and outsource their errands. Reportedly some “TaskRabbits” (the errand runners) earn up to $3000 per week in a US economy struggling to reinvent itself after the GFC. What is interesting is that Botman believes this evolution in social networking also has the ability to place a value on a person’s reputational capital and that this will become an important metric in the twenty-first century.

Developing strong trusting relationships—or new friendships—in a social networked collaborative environment could see the reference checks for future employees move beyond the eBay feedback ratings or the Facebook wall posts, to something quite unique and based on how we develop relational friendships through collaborative entrepreneurship.

Friendships are important to everyone, but particularly to teenagers and especially to girls. How girls define themselves at this often vulnerable age is a reflection of the peer group they belong to, or the one to which they aspire. It is a time of moving from the shared commonalities of the family to the independence of the individual and eventual adulthood. What constitutes a ‘good’ friend and what does not is perhaps a very personal definition, but I would suggest that being a good friend is not about what you benefit from in the relationship, but in fact what you give to it.

Year 12, over the course of your time at Girls Grammar, you will have made many friends I suspect—some close, some not so close. Some may remain with you for life. It is also possible to extend friendship beyond the personal. Your Head Girls, Angelique and Lucinda, have been dedicated friends to Year 12 and wonderful friends to the School. As representatives of you, they have given their time, loyalty and ideas to a place they hold in high regard—and we in turn hold them and you in high regard. They are, in fact, the essence of the Grammar force and I thank them—and I sincerely thank every member of Year 12—for the fine leadership and spirit with which you have all approached the 2011 sisterhood. In Vanessa Amorosi’s words: Everybody needs someone thinking of them … Absolutely everybody in the whole wide world …

[Play Year 2011 Flash Mob DVD]

As Aristotle observed, ‘the desire for friendship comes quickly; friendship dies not’.

Year 12 never forget that Girls Grammar will always consider you true friends.

DR AMANDA BELL

NOTES:

1 Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia

REFERENCES:


Opening Address

Miss Felicity Williams attended Brisbane Girls Grammar School from 1960 to 1963. At The University of Queensland she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts and soon thereafter began her career at Somerville House in the History department and as a private Speech and Drama teacher. In 1976 she was appointed Senior Mistress and obtained a Bachelor of Educational Studies from UQ. In 1996 she was awarded a Masters in Education from the History department and as a private Speech and Drama teacher. In 1976 she was appointed Senior Mistress and obtained a Bachelor of Educational Studies from UQ. In 1996 she was awarded a Masters in Education from the History department and as a private Speech and Drama teacher.
career options available to both sexes today simply did not exist as I completed my first university degree. As an historian used to analyzing social movements of the past where change, although ultimately profound, moved with snail-like tempo, contemporary career options for women are astonishing in their extent and variety although a significant number of women still struggle to remove institutional and social barriers to workplace equality and wage equity.

Despite the blandness and limitations of opportunities when I completed my initial degree, I had always wanted to be a teacher and nothing in forty-five years practice has changed my mind about the worth and essential nobility of this profession. Now, being a teacher is no sinecure; it’s not for the faint hearted. It demands knowledge, patience, humour, preparation, organisation and imagination. Whatever dodgy strategies adolescents can devise have to be managed and redirected into positive activity. Teaching is rather like gardening—planting seeds, providing nourishment and encouragement, containing weeds and hoping for a beautiful outcome. It’s a joyful, growth promoting experience. There’s always something novel, curious, challenging, awful, funny, frustrating and fulfilling happening—often all at once. Of course, the digital revolution has changed the dynamics of the stereotype classroom with teacher as the all powerful dispenser of essential knowledge. Today, teachers act as guides, facilitators, tutors and co-learners supporting students in their learning tasks as researchers, problem-solvers and collaborative project managers.

Methodologies, pedagogies, strategies and technologies may have transformed many operations in our classrooms but that essential respectful relationship between teacher and learner remains the ethical underpinning of educational practice in a time of fluid social values and transitory relationships. Social commentators point to dissonant features in contemporary Australia—greed, narcissism, materialism, aggressive individualism, family breakdown, global uncertainty and information overload. How do the nurseries in society—parents and teachers especially—provide support and wise counsel to assist adolescents, especially our young women—to thrive when confronted with uncertainty and contested values? How do we encourage a stronger sense of self to counteract the unrelenting pressures of others’ directedness offered by the fabulous digital communication devices?

As our School has worked to shape our new Aspiration (To be a leader in exceptional scholarship)—our touchstone for the next four years—such questions were central to discussion. We considered the qualities we were seeking to foster in our students to strengthen ‘self-agency’ and to encourage judicious and ethical engagement with the world. Descriptors included intellectually robust, resourceful, resilient, optimistic, competent, purposeful, responsible, empathetic, wise and ethical. Strength of character, leadership and collaborative skills, the ability and willingness to contribute to community were also listed.

A US scholar and futurist, John Schaar, wrote: ‘The future is not some place we are going to, but one we are creating. The paths are not to be found but made; and the activity of making them changes both the maker and the destination.’ I believe that the broad, liberal education our school provides through classroom practice, the Mentorship experience, the co-curricular programme and House and Service activities all work together to promote individual confidence and self-reliance. As has been the case through the history of the School, our young women—including the students in this Assembly today—will be leaders in shaping or creating the future of our state and nation.

Year 12 students, you are almost at the end of your Grammar journey; I hope it has been a predominantly joyful experience. In a few years’ time, we will be reading of your amazing exploits in the Alumni News as you fulfill your career dreams as lawyers, medicos, environmentalists, scientists, urban planners, ships’ captains, captains of industry, writers, astronomers, engineers, inventors of, I might hope, teachers. Perhaps your particular work role has not yet been invented and almost certainly will change many times. In varied capacities, you will help and heal the planet—not just in your own nation but across the globe. We will see you everywhere and know that your parents’ love and support, your education and experiences at Grammar and your own determination and skills have enabled you to seize life’s wonderful opportunities. Inevitably there will be disappointments; that’s the reality of human existence.

As a new tertiary student, entering the Forgan Smith Building at the University of Queensland for the first time, I noted an inscription over a portal—‘The unexamined life is not worth living’. Attributed to Socrates, this maxim has remained with me throughout my professional life and remains a source of personal strength. It is important to reflect on both sorrows and pleasures, disconnect from the world for a time, replenish your spirit and maintain a strong sense of self.

Remain a learner your entire life. Be strong, be brave and with apologies to seventeenth-century poet, Andrew Marvell and his coy mistress:… roll all your strength, and allYour sweetness, up into one ball;… tear your pleasures with rough strifeThrough the iron gates of life;... though you cannot make our sunStand still, yet you will make him run.

To have been part of this great School has been a privilege and I look forward to hearing of its activities in providing thoughtfully crafted education for the young women in its care. All the best for the future—what a great adventure it will be!

MELISSA FELICITY WILLIAMS DEPUTY PRINCIPAL EMERITA

Good afternoon Ms Jameson, Chair of the Board of Trustees, Dr Bell, distinguished guests, staff, parents and girls, we would like to begin today by thanking our guest speaker. It is not every year that the School is fortunate enough to have the pleasure of hearing from someone with such a deep connection with, and understanding of, this exceptional school. Miss Williams certainly fits these criteria with so many years of close involvement with Brisbane Girls Grammar School.

Only a history teacher would consider her past a lesson in work places, a reminder for us to keep the fight going as we leave with the conviction gained from our Girls Grammar education. And finally, we related strongly to your advice to embrace failure. This theme has been approached a number of times over the past couple of weeks, most recently by our School Counsellor, Mrs Belbin, who hoped that we had suffered disappointment during our time here at Girls Grammar so that we could grow. As Year 12s, we are starting to realise that through inevitable failure and disappointment in the big, wide world, our resilience and ability to learn from these disappointments will help us to become better and stronger people. Miss Williams, thank you for your advice and your best wishes for the future, which we would like to return in acknowledgement of your retirement this year. Please accept these flowers on behalf of everyone in the Girls Grammar community, past and present.
From the first day of this year, the girls of Grammar have adopted our vision and our motto to ‘feel the G-FORCE, be the G-FORCE and embrace the sisterhood’. This year it has been our aspiration to share with every girl, what Ange and I call the Epiphany. The Epiphany is that moment when you realise how special the School is and you can fully appreciate the force that binds us together, the spirit of the School, the G-FORCE, that we could open their eyes to the extraordinary everyday life at Grammar and encourage them to make the most of it. It is not every school that has dress-up days, weeks dedicated to fundraising or promoting the arts, that comes first, second and third place in cross country, athletics and swimming respectively and still engages in consistently exceptional academic achievement.

This community helped us to develop our concept of a sisterhood. A sisterhood is not just a place where a lot of over-excited girls come together to share good times. A sisterhood is a society of women unified by a common cause and what could fit this description more perfectly than Brisbane Girls Grammar School? Its common cause is to establish an educational foundation for young women to contribute confidently to their world with wisdom, imagination and integrity. As the students, our common goal is to achieve our very best in whatever way shape or form, to be unique, to make a positive change. We sought to trigger at least a glimpse of this Epiphany in all students through our motto. We hoped that by identifying the force that binds us together, the spirit of the School, the G-FORCE, that we could open their eyes to the extraordinary everyday life at Grammar and encourage them to make the most of it. It is not every school that has dress-up days, weeks dedicated to fundraising or promoting the arts, that comes first, second and third place in cross country, athletics and swimming respectively and still engages in consistently exceptional academic achievement.

We also hoped that the concept of a sisterhood would encourage mutual support and love within the School. We aspired for girls to want to support their fellow Grammarians and to wear their uniform correctly because they felt proud to be part of this sisterhood. We also wanted more than anything for Grammar girls passing in the street, although they may not know each other by name or grade, to smile at each other because they know that they are part of the Grammar family. We encouraged girls to make new friends in their classes and co-curricular activities, regardless of grade, and to look out and care for their current friends. Expanding relationships are important, growing and changing right from Year 8, right up until the end of Year 12 or beyond. After five full years we can all say that it has definitely been beneficial to our learning. We also wish to thank our Principal, Dr Bell, for her inspiring leadership and dedication to this wonderful School. Your influence on Brisbane Girls Grammar School over the past ten years has truly allowed it to push boundaries. Embracing and excelling the arts, sport and constantly advancing technology to improve learning while still maintaining Grammar’s tradition of exceptional academic results, community service, and strong values is an extraordinary achievement. Could everyone please join us in thanking our Principal, Dr Bell.

It is impossible to see something exactly as someone else does, or to have the same feelings toward it. Nevertheless, we hope that every girl in this room has been able to see the School in the light of the Epiphany, but specifically the Year 12s. As you bask in your last moments as students of Brisbane Girls Grammar School, we hope that you feel satisfied with what you have learned and gained from the School, as well as what you have contributed to it. You have all made an impact on the School and it is safe to say that it has made an equally significant impact on you. As our hours at this school dwindle, we wish you all the best for the future. The seniors of 2011 are an exceptional year, we work together, we work hard and we work with enthusiasm. We know these qualities will hold you in good stead for the coming years. In the words of our Valedictory speaker and alumna, Dr Emily Granger, ‘anything is possible if you use your knowledge and skill, and you never ever give up’. Remember to find your passion girls, accept challenges and never forget the importance of family and friends. We came in Year 8 as the little fish in a big pond, strangers to one another. Now as Year 12s, we leave as big fish in a little pond, as Grammar sisters.

Thank you to every member of the Grammar family for a wonderful year and for the final time, ‘May the G-Force always be with you’.

ANGELIQUE SWEEP AND LUCINDA TONGE
Ms Elizabeth Jameson, Chair of Board of Trustees; Dr Amanda Bell, Principal and Ms Margaret Ridley, President of Parents & Friends Association; guests, teachers, parents and most importantly Year 12s of 2011!

It is good to be back! It seems only yesterday that I was at my own Valedictory Dinner, Thursday 14 November 1991, Guineas Function Centre, Eagle Farm Racecourse, Ascot, with Judge Margaret McMurdo as the guest speaker. Exams finished, awaiting final results to determine university or college courses and Speech Day approaching. My parents had me enrolled on the Grammar Reef Trip to Tryon Island instead of schoolies, so priorities lay with sunscreen, togs and camping gear. Five years of schooling at Brisbane Girls Grammar School almost at an end, wondering ‘what comes next?’.

Twenty years ago Brisbane Girls Grammar School was a little different: our classes were in W block, G block, E Block. Music and Drama resided in the Gehrmann Theatre, summer Physical Education consisted of bronze medallion training in a 25m pool down the bottom of the School with the tuckshop located above. We had one tiny room for Art classes at the back of the School near the fence to Brisbane Grammar. There was the running track, one computer room and one auditorium with no air conditioning. School assemblies occurred at Brisbane Grammar every Monday. ‘Now Thank We All Our God’ would ring out as the Principal, Mrs Hancock, senior teaching staff and Head Girls walked down the centre aisle to the stage. If you were caught talking during the assembly you would have to stand up in the middle of the School for everyone to look at you.

The Boarding House occupied the centre of the School; the Japanese Garden and Flagpole Lawn had just been built. The Memorial Outdoor Education Centre had just been built, and we progressed from tents in Year 8 to a dormitory in Year 12! Griffith home room in Year 8 was W23. Mobile phones were the size of four iPads strapped together; computers were slow bulky devices that were good for Tetris, Pacman and programming with TurboPascal 2.1 in Maths 2.

Some things however remain the same: an education that inspired us, motivated us, challenged us to be the best we could. An education that emphasised girls could achieve anything they wanted, with hard work, application and determination. The School was more than the buildings, books and computers. What made Brisbane Girls Grammar School great was the group of girls that attended the School: the School spirit; a belief that any Grammar girl could take on the world and make a difference.

Tonight I would like to take you through my ‘what next’ story. Girls Grammar provided the foundation for what came next, allowed me to challenge assumptions and stereotypes, and gave me a determination to keep going. The work ethic, teamwork and self-belief from my experiences at Grammar helped guide me down a path that often turned out to be unconventional, ‘risky’ but ultimately a path of great reward. Associated with this talk tonight are a few photos and I apologise if a few are a bit vivid, given that we have just completed dinner.

Why medicine? I always wanted to be a scientist. At Grammar I had inspirational Biology teachers, patient Chemistry teachers (my incessant questions!) and tolerant Maths teachers (more questions!!!). My cousin was studying to be a doctor and I admired her, and I thought helping sick people get better was the ultimate profession. The concept of healing a sick patient with an operation was amazing; to cut out a tumour,
plate a broken bone, suture up a mangled leg, relieve an obstructed bowel and restore someone’s sight was the ultimate challenge. I was accepted into The University of Queensland Medical School Undergraduate Course—six years long. While Girls Grammar had prepared me well, university life was very different. The volume of information covered in each subject was huge—embryology, anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, chemistry, microbiology, pathology—and that was just the first semester! No one checks to see if you turn up to lectures, no one checks to see if you are awake, or taking good notes. There are great university social events on offer, more sport, debating, politics if you want, and all this time you need to keep up to date with the studies to make Swat Vac not a total nightmare. The university experience, however, was fantastic.

The years about to start will set you up for the future—your future profession and life. This is the chance to develop your ideas, research your theories, discover something new and begin to make your mark on the world. This is to be inspired by knowledge and learning, and inspire others to follow your lead. The journey will have its ups and downs: one professor of medicine now long retired would openly declare women only do medicine part time (seen my time sheets!); during training it was presumed by some that women cannot do orthopaedics because they are not strong enough (nonsense, what are power drills for?), women only want to be General Practitioners to write scripts for antibiotics and do PAP smears (tell that to the rural GPs delivering babies, doing appendectomies, emergency caesarean sections, intubating critically unwell patients, on call, day in, day out).

During this time I met my future husband, David, a typical mining engineer, so I had drawn the line straight away (not the first date): ‘If I end up marrying you I will never go to mining’. So after graduation in 1997 I started work at Royal Brisbane Hospital as an intern. We married on the first date: ‘If I end up marrying you I will never go to mining’. I later was sent to Mount Isa, a small mining town in the middle of Queensland.

Now when I told my consultants at work that I was off to Mount Isa they said I was committing professional suicide. ‘You will get no training there, learn bad habits and no one will know you when you come to get on the training program for surgery’. My response was different. This was a challenge. I could make a real difference in a place that needed doctors, possibly get to do more surgery in theatre due to less competition from like-minded junior doctors, and study for my surgical primary exams—a place where David could complete his PhD and get a good foundation in mining, and where I could continue my development as a doctor. Two years later I passed my surgical exam, completed one hundred and fifty skin lesion excisions, three hundred operations by myself, where I could continue my development as a doctor. Two years later I passed my surgical exam, completed one hundred and fifty skin lesion excisions, three hundred operations by myself.

I was actually keen to return to a mining town, do trauma surgery, aortic dissection and lung cancer surgery. As I held the heart together in one hand I helped him back up all their cars at the airstrip, headlights on, as it was getting dark, so the plane could land. As she went up to the plane the women lined up the children, and she laid a hand on almost every child’s head as the plane took off all the children ran after the tail lights. From that day on, everyone always waved when I went for a run down the dirt roads. An amazing time and one I would never had experienced if the challenge was not accepted. Life goes on, however, and I needed to further my surgical training and get onto a training program. We decided to return to Perth—mining companies for David, Royal Perth Hospital for me. At this stage I had settled upon orthopaedic surgery. I was actually keen to return to a mining town, do trauma orthopaedics, hand and plastic surgery. Unfortunately there was no orthopaedic job, only cardiothoracic surgery. The lady in Medical Administration reassured me that ‘you cut the sternum to get to the heart’. I thought a week or two should be okay. In the first week I assisted valve surgery, coronary bypass grafts, my first heart transplant, paediatric heart surgery, aortic dissection and lung cancer surgery. Not a bad experience four years out of medical school.

During my first week back in Perth I was assisting heart surgery on a five-year-old boy when the surgeon sawed through his heart. As I held the heart together in one hand I helped him save the boy’s life by putting him on a heart lung machine through the groin vessels. Amazing surgery, amazing surgeon. The boy survived. When I finally decided to do Cardiothoracic Surgery six months later my husband said, ‘I knew you would want to do heart surgery after that first week, it just took you six months’.
They can land! The police rush the heart to St Vincent's but the plane cannot land. Four hours, five hours, six hours pass. It is well and truly gone. "It was a bucket and gives its last wriggle. No chance to stitch that back in now: it was well and truly gone.

The donor heart function is 'ischaemic time'; how long the donor heart has been 'on ice'. Less than four hours is okay, best to be under six hours, over six is bad, eight hours the heart will never work! I started early on the recipient patient operation, as I expected the donor heart ischaemic time to be around four hours. First problem: as I scrub up my anaesthetist yells, ‘Nil sine labore.’

Second problem: the violent thunder storm hits Sydney and one back in now: it was well and truly gone. Four hours. First problem: as I scrub up my anaesthetist yells, ‘Nil sine labore.’

Like Brisbane Girls Grammar School, team spirit and camaraderie are important. The foundations of knowledge and skill at St Vincent’s Hospital come from Dr Harry Windsor and Dr Victor Chang’s era and we pride ourselves in delivering to our patients results that are world best. Research is vital, and we are leaders in new technology and contemporary treatments and surgical techniques. I did my first heart transplant in 2003, a young woman previously fit and well who developed a cardiomyopathy. In 2004 I did my first lung transplant on a man with emphysema. I placed my first mechanical heart in a moribund patient in 2006, and then I took it out a year later and gave him a brand new heart transplant.

One of my recent heart transplants epitomises why I love what I do. We had a heart flying in from a distant hospital. The donor was young; they never got to graduate from high school. The family in such tragic circumstances made the brave and compassionate decision to go ahead with organ donation. They wanted to give others a chance at the life their relative never got to have. One of the critical factors in donor heart function is ‘ischaemic time’; how long the donor heart has been ‘on ice’. Less than four hours is okay, best to be under six hours, over six is bad, eight hours the heart will never work! I started early on the recipient patient operation, as I expected the donor heart ischaemic time to be around four hours. First problem: as I scrub up my anaesthetist yells, ‘Nil sine labore.’ He’s arrested. The patient is having CPR on the operating table, never a good way to start an operation. This patient was sick! We quickly prep and drape, open the chest and get him on the heart lung machine. He is alive, just. The heart is the size of a football, each contraction is barely visible. So I cut out his heart and wait. He doesn’t know what to say, but his family almost tackle me with a group hug. They say thank you, thank you to the donor and their family, even though they will never meet them in person. The surprising thing is I grow up within fifteen kilometres of this patient. Who would have thought that one day I would give him a heart transplant?

My husband will often pick me up from work if I have been transplanting for a day or so. One day leaving work a lady chased the car. David slowed down and wound down the window. She leaned through and said, ‘Dr Granger, thank you for the new lungs. I can run for the first time in four years. I am going to my daughter’s sports carnival this weekend and I can keep up with her now.’ Heart and lung transplantation is one of the greatest gifts you can give someone. I am privileged to work at St Vincent’s Hospital with some of the most skilled, hardworking doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, and allied health staff. My patients never give up, and we never give up too. We support and stay with them for as long as they can fight on.

The final part of my talk comes back to an essential part of everyone’s existence—family. When times get rough, and times do, family and friends are vital. They love and support you unconditionally. They give you strength to get back up and try again, and they believe in you. I have two beautiful girls who one day I hope will be sitting at a Valedictory Dinner, inspired to chase their dreams, determined to make a difference in the world, confident in their ability to face a challenge and ready to embark on an adventure.

Life is an adventure. Find something you love and pursue a career in it. Heart and lung transplantation offers patients a new chance at life. From a great tragedy comes hope and new life. Patients who will not survive twelve months have the chance post-transplant to live a normal life, go to university, see their children grow up, run again, and work again. Eleven years after graduating from medical school I completed my training to be a Cardiothoracic and Heart Lung Transplant Surgeon. My training took me from Brisbane to Mount Isa to Perth to St Vincent’s Hospital, Sydney, to Papworth Hospital, United Kingdom, and back to Sydney. I work with a skilled and dedicated transplant team who uncomplainingly turn up at 2:00 am and get the patient through their operation and better again.

The patient through their operation and better again.

The operation takes about eight hours. The next day I see my patient in the Intensive Care Unit. He is warm, he has pulses is his feet, his biggest problem is now high blood pressure. He doesn’t know what to say, but his family almost tackle me with a group hug. They say thank you, thank you to the donor and their family, even though they will never meet them in person. The surprising thing is I grow up within fifteen kilometres of this patient. Who would have thought that one day I would give him a heart transplant?

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Your life is ahead of you now. The foundations are well set, but now it is time to progress to new challenges, new adventures. Chase your dreams, never give up and you will achieve great things. So ‘what next?’ It is up to you.
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Mrs Carolyn Lansdown, BAOutEd, GradDipEd
Mr Richard Lass, BEd (PG), BA (Hons), MEd (Term I – III)
Ms Natasha Littler, BA/BEd
Ms Tracey Maclean BA (Hons), GradDipEd GrDipTESOL

STAFF LIST

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ACADEMIC STAFF

Ms Jane Mariel, RAppSPhCHMS (Term I – IV)
Mr Paul Martineau, BA (Hons), BEd
Dr Natasha Mayer, BA (Hons), BEed, PhD
Ms Sarah McCarney, BMusEd, MMusSt, MACE
Ms Bronwyn McKeen, BA, DipEd, CertFineArts
* Mrs Carol McIntosh, BEd, GradDipOutEd, MA
Mrs Chris Moore, BA, DipEd, MACE
Ms Susan Morrison, BEd (Sec)
Mrs Judith Muller, DipEd, BSc, GrDipCompEd, DipBus/FrontlineMgmt
Mrs Lynne Munroe, BHMSc/Ed (Sem II)
Ms Kate Niel, BMHS, RappSPhEd
Ms Deborah Perz, BSc, BEd
* Mrs Paula Quinn, PGDipEd BA BA(Hons) (MAppLearn)
Mr Michael Ramsay, ERHach, GradDipOutEd
Mrs Patricia Rhodes, BA (Hons), DipT
Mrs Katrina Rivers, BA (Drama), GradDipEd
* Mrs Nicole Robbins, BHMS Ed (Term I – III)
Mr Mitchell Rosenlund, RappSPhCHMS (BEd/Sec)
Ms Jacqueline Ross, BSc (Hons), GradDipT (Term I)
* Mrs Elizabeth Sawyer, BSc, GradDipT
Ms Robyn Sheinfeld, RCi (Drama), BEd (Sec) (Hons)
Miss Isabel Smith, BEd
Mrs Julie Smith, BA(Hons)/Eng, CertEd
Ms Alyxia Stack, RappSPhCHMS (Ed)
Ms Linda Thomas, BA, DipEd, Cert English
* Mrs Monica Urry, BSc, BEd
Ms Anna Van Homrigh, BSc(Hons), DipEd
Mrs Pao Vires, BSc, DipEd
Miss Emily Walsh, BSc, GradDipEd
Ms Naizie Waverley-Smith, BA(Hons), BEd (Sec) (Term III)
Mr Peter Willemse, Doctoranushas, GrCertEng, GrDipEd (Sec) (Term I – III)
Mrs Karen West, BA/BEd
Mrs Christine Woodward, BSc, DipEd
Mr Peter Woods, BA, MSc/Trach
* Mrs Jane Zealand, BSc/Hons, PostGradCertEd

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC STAFF

Bassoon
* Mrs Lorna Dean, BMus(Bassoon)

Cello
* Mrs Helen Sharp, BMus, GradDipMsn

Choral & Voice
* Ms Kim Sykes, BMus, AMusA (Seq I)
* Mrs Stephanie Eaton, BMus/Perf (Seq I)
* BMus/Perf, GradDipEd (Term III – IV)

Clarinet
* Mrs Cathy Simmers, BMus, GradDipEd

Co-ordinator of Band Programme & Brass
Mr Paul Bucharski, BA, MMus, GradDipL&T

Double Bass
* Ms Angela MacKenzie, BMus

Flute
* Ms Anne MacAulay Auld, BMus(MusEd)

Guitar
* Mr Ian Weston, BSc(Perf), MMusSt

Oboe
* Ms Natasha Kakes, BMus(Mus), GradDipPerf(QCUTGU), AMusA

Percussion
* Mr Jacob Cavanaugh, BMus

Piano Accompaniment
* Ms Anne-Marie Eyles, GradCertEd(Mgmt), DipEd, BMus, AMusA
* Ms Sherelle Eyles, MMusA, ARCM (GradDip), BMus, LMusA
* MS Natasha Kalous, BMus(Hons), GradDipPerf(QCUTGU), Oboe
* Mrs Anne-Maree Eyles, GradCertEdMgmt, DipEd, BMus, AMusA
* Mr Gary Holley, BMus(MusEd), MMusSt
* Ms Kathy Sanders, GradDipCA, GradDipMus, AMusA
* Miss Kym Scott, BMus, AMusA

Siematic Music Staff

Bassoon
* Mrs Lorna Dean, BMus(Bassoon)

Cello
* Mrs Helen Sharp, BMus, GradDipMsn

Choral & Voice
* Ms Kim Sykes, BMus, AMusA (Seq I)
* Mrs Stephanie Eaton, BMus/Perf (Seq I)
* BMus/Perf, GradDipEd (Term III – IV)

Clarinet
* Mrs Cathy Simmers, BMus, GradDipEd

Co-ordinator of Band Programme & Brass
Mr Paul Bucharski, BA, MMus, GradDipL&T

Double Bass
* Ms Angela MacKenzie, BMus

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* Ms Sherelle Eyles, MMusA, ARCM (GradDip), BMus, LMusA
* Ms Kathy Sanders, GradDipCA, GradDipMus, AMusA, AMusPerf

Saxophone
Mr Craig Dabelstein, BA Mus Tech, BMusTech

Violin/Viola
* Ms Andrea Messenger, BMus (Violin/Viola)

Voice
* Mr Gary Holley, BMus(MusEd), MMus(MusEd), MMusSt, AMusA


PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Accounts Clerk
Mrs Jan King

Administrative Assistant
Mrs Jennifer Stafford, DipBus

Administrative Assistant
Mrs Gillian McHarg

Administrative Assistant – Data Entry
* Mrs Wendy Bradley
* Ms Suan Clark, BBus(Studies) (Term I)

Administrative Assistant – Enrolments
Ms Lauretta Anderson (Term I)
Mrs Lynne Madders

Administrative Assistant – ICT
* Mrs Leigh Fitzsimmon

Administrative Assistant – Music
* Mrs Liz Worth

Audio Visual & Media Technician
Mr Matthew Roure, BMusTech

Carpenter
Mr Robert Vogler

Communications & Events Manager
Ms Mary Bishop, BBusComm (Term I)
Ms Tye Smith

Communications Officer
Mr Robert Theatres, RA (Media)

Database Manager
* Mrs Wendy Carter

Desktop Support Technician
Mr Dane Culley, Cert IV IT (Networking), BBusTech

Enrolments Registrar
Ms Michelle Finney-Smith, DipT(Primary), GradDiplBlanderEd
Mr Paul Kucharski, BA, MACE, MACEA, FAIM

Executive Assistant to the Principal
Ms Danielle Guimara

Facilities Officer
Mr Graeme Lakey

Grounds
Mr Ben McCann

Housekeeper
Mrs Leonie Doran

Health Care Co-ordinator
Mrs Carolyn Hann, SRN

ICT Support Officer
Mr James Pinnell, DipL&T, MCTS
### STAFF LIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intranet &amp; Systems Administrator</td>
<td>Ms Tegan Barry, BGamesInteractiveEnt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laboratory Assistant</td>
<td>Ms Sarah Simpson, BSc(Hons)</td>
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<td>Ms Jennifer Hartwig, BSc(Hons)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leading Hand/Groundsperson</td>
<td>Mr Ray Goodrich</td>
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<tr>
<td>Librarian – Special Collections</td>
<td>Mrs Jenny Davis, BA(Hons), GradDipArts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library Technician</td>
<td>Mrs Jane Tripp, DipLibInfStudies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library Assistant</td>
<td>Ms Tilly Askey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Network/Systems Administrator</td>
<td>Mrs Rebecca Adamson, BAMM, DipMM, CNA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor Education Assistant</td>
<td>Ms Virginia Mitchell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Payroll Officer</td>
<td>Mrs Brigitte Bickham</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Assistant to Deputy Principal</td>
<td>Ms Sally Condon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Assistant to Deputy Principal Emerita and Business Manager</td>
<td>Mrs Jane Inoxco</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philanthropic Programmes Manager</td>
<td>Ms Michelle James, BA (Term I – III)</td>
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<td>Project Officer (Finance)</td>
<td>Ms Toby Humble</td>
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<td>Receptionist</td>
<td>Mrs Tracey Bilton</td>
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<td>Ms Annie Lawrie (Term I - III)</td>
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<td>* Mrs Lorraine Skillen (Term IV)</td>
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<td>Reference Librarian</td>
<td>Ms Helen Demauw, BA, GradDipLibSc</td>
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<td>* Mrs Jill Rogers, BA, GradDipLibSc, MAppSc</td>
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<td>Risk &amp; Compliance Officer</td>
<td>Mrs Tina Haeupeter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary to Dean of Studies (Full time)</td>
<td>Ms Sandra Griffiths, DipBusAdmin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary to Dean of Studies (Part time)</td>
<td>* Mrs Sue Martin, DipBus(Couns)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary to Dean of Students, School Counsellors, Student Absences</td>
<td>Ms Jennifer Smith</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary to Facilities &amp; Property Manager</td>
<td>Mrs Melanie Ellis (Term I – III)</td>
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<td>Mrs Dianna Fitzgerald</td>
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<td>Security</td>
<td>Mr Terry Brown</td>
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<td>Senior Audio Visual &amp; Media Technician</td>
<td>Mr Laurence Yates, BAnim (Sem I)</td>
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<td>Mr Frank Casablanca, DipMultimedia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sports Manager &amp; Workplace Health &amp; Safety Officer</td>
<td>Mr Barry Greatorex, BSPORTSTUDIES(Admin), GradDipOutEd, MALeisure.Mgt.MSSA</td>
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<td>Stores Officer</td>
<td>Mr Phillip Hopkins</td>
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<td>* Ms Michelle James, BA (Term I – III)</td>
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Our Intent

Proud of our Grammar tradition that establishes the educational foundation for YOUNG WOMEN to contribute confidently to their world with wisdom, imagination and integrity.