AN against-the-odds survival story has inspired students at Brisbane Girls Grammar School.

Dean Clifford spoke to senior students last Friday about the rare and incurable skin condition he was diagnosed with at an early age.

Though not expected to survive early childhood, an in constant pain, Mr Clifford has made it to the age of 28.

He is the ambassador for the Association of Competitive Employment, promoting equal opportunities in the workforce for people with a disability.

“You need to surround yourself with those who love you and believe in you and your goals,” Mr Clifford told the students.

Year 11 student Juliana Ding said his speech had motivated her.

“Mr Clifford’s address was definitely the most inspirational speech that we have ever experienced,” she said. “At first, I think many people were confronted by his appearance but soon forgot about it once he started telling his story.

“His charisma and energy was refreshing and by the end of the speech he had us on our feet applauding.

“It was hard to believe that he was in pain and he didn’t show it in any way.”

Mr Clifford’s visit followed a chance meeting with staff member Gary Bromiley.