

# Lights Out

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AUSTRALIAN  
BOARDING  
SCHOOLS  
ASSOCIATION

CREATING THE FUTURE FOR BOARDING SCHOOLS



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## Contents

- 02 Masculinity in the 21st Century: Part 2
- 06 One Life, One Choice
- 07 Victoria Student Leadership Conference
- 08 Cyber Bullying
- 09 All Employed!
- 10 Study Tasmania's International Student Graduate of the Year
- 12 The Boarding School Tutoring Program Changing Young Lives
- 15 The Aquinas College Relay for Life
- 18 The Sleep Connection
- 20 Fans of the Flame
- 21 Boarding Leaders' Network at Santa Maria College
- 22 Real First Aid
- 24 An Effective International Boarders Immersion Program - Knox's Story
- 27 Strategic Planning
- 28 The World has Changed!
- 30 Dopamine
- 32 Culture... a Quintessential Concept in Boarding
- 35 Purpose-Built Year Seven Boarding House
- 36 Mastering the Art of Managing a Student's Transition to University and College
- 38 New Technology Redefines Classroom Teaching Opportunities
- 40 Boarding School Fee Inflation Shows No Sign of Slowing
- 41 New Principals
- 43 New Heads of Boarding
- 47 From the Chairman

### ON THE COVER

Victorian Student Leaders Conference, March 2018

### CONTACT US

Australian Boarding Schools Association.  
Postal: PO Box 5569, Brendale, Qld. 4500  
Office: Unit 6, 3 Hinkler Court,  
Brendale, Qld. 4500  
P + 61 7 3205 4940  
F + 61 7 3205 6567  
E [absa@boarding.org.au](mailto:absa@boarding.org.au)  
[www.boarding.org.au](http://www.boarding.org.au)

### EDITOR

Richard Stokes, Executive Director,  
Australian Boarding Schools Association

### GRAPHIC DESIGN

ddprint - [ddprint@mac.com](mailto:ddprint@mac.com)  
+61 438 028 569

### PRINTING

Clikprint - [info@clikprint.com.au](mailto:info@clikprint.com.au)

# Masculinity in the 21st Century: Part 2

## What It Means to Be a Role Model for Boys

### AUTHOR

Dr. Christopher Thurber  
Clinical Psychologist and Faculty Member  
Phillips Exeter Academy  
United States

In Part 1 of this series for *Lights Out*, I shared some family history and suggested that an outdated concept of a self-made man was someone who took wild risks, showed little emotion (positive or negative), relied more on charm than smarts, and acquired material wealth. As I see it, the modern self-made man is more complex.

- **He is discerning.** He watches how people treat one another at play, at work, in families, and in places of worship, and he chooses which examples to follow. He recognises true beauty and nurtures the signature strengths in others and in himself.
- **He is respectful.** He examines emotions and behaviours in himself and others, embracing fairness, honesty, loyalty, hard work, and sober consent. He rejects sex as a commodity or conquest, and does not confuse assertiveness with violence.
- **He is confident.** He cares for his body and doesn't let his biological sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation constrain or define his goals. He values his genitals, whatever their shape or size and relinquishes the self-doubt engendered by pop culture or pornography.
- **He is courageous.** He takes initiative without being reckless. He is imaginative and creative without being wasteful. He takes healthy risks, not to impress his friends but to help others - and himself - achieve virtuous goals.
- **He is gritty.** He perseveres through challenges, not out of fear of being called feminine (a pussy or wuss), but because he understands that hard work is necessary for success, that failure teaches more than success, and that set-backs are part of the path to achievement.

• **He is articulate.** He expresses negative emotions, including fear, sadness, frustration, shame, as clearly as he expresses positive emotions, such as joy, pride, admiration, and love. He also listens carefully and openly empathises with others thoughts and feelings.

• **He is entertaining.** He laughs a lot and makes others laugh. He has fun while inhibiting impulses that could harm himself or others. He relishes spontaneity as much as careful planning and always does his best to be mindful of the consequences for himself and for others.

• **He is unselfish.** He eschews materialism and he shares in proportion to his prosperity. He knows that a truly fortunate man is attached to people, places, and pursuits, not to money or objects. He takes every opportunity to teach what he knows.

• **He is humble.** He recognises that there are entities in the universe more important than him, as an individual. He consistently demonstrates a willingness to learn, to atone, to make amends, and to strive to be his best self and contribute to society.

• **He is rustic.** He appreciates and cares for the natural world. He recognises that wasting resources, over-populating the planet, and generating pollution show disrespect for future generations, whereas immersion in nature is good for the soul and motivates conservation.



I've waxed philosophical and given you a modern definition of masculinity. But I've failed. The constructs I just outlined define a good person, not a good boy or great man. To be genuine, respectful, confident, bold, gritty, articulate, entertaining, unselfish, humble, and rustic apply equally well to great girls and women, as well as to great people who are questioning their gender identity.

But I'm not racking my paddle that easily.

### Freedom

I was four years old when Marlo Thomas and Friends pressed the vinyl record *Free To Be You and Me*. It was the liberation anthem for toddlers of the time and included a skit called *Boy Meets Girl*, starring comedian Mel Brooks. He and Thomas voiced two newborns talking in adjacent bassinets and trying to figure out who is the boy and who is the girl.

The two characters go through some usual gender role stereotypes, such as who likes flowers and the colour pink, who likes trucks and the colour blue, and who is afraid of spiders. There is so much gender non-conformity that they have no idea who is the boy and who is the girl. Until the nurse comes to change their diapers, at which point Thomas's character squeals, "You see that? I *am* the girl. And *you're* a boy!" Once again, the penis saves the day.

But not so fast. Between one and two percent of all people are born with ambiguous genitalia. It's about as common as having red hair. So I have failed again. One more strike and I'm out. If we're going to ask "What makes a great boy or man?" then perhaps we should give masculinity a psychological starting point, rather than a cultural one or a physical one.



## Feeling Manly

OK, then. Here we go. For anyone who identifies as a boy or a man, what makes them both great *and* uniquely masculine? It isn't my top ten character traits and it isn't external genitalia. Maybe boys and men be defined not by what they *have* or what they *accept*, but by what they *reject*. Some men, like William Pollock, Dan Kindlon, Michael Thompson, Michael Gurian, and Tony Porter, think so. These authors have expanded and amplified the 1972 stance celebrated on the *Free To Be You and Me* record: Real boys and real men refuse to be pigeonholed.

Whether you call it a Boy Code or a Man Box, the message is the same: True masculinity is about embracing your humanity and discarding the masculine stereotype as unfeeling, violent, and strictly heterosexual. Enlightened males also discard the stereotype of women as weak, soft, inferior objects.

I think I just failed to define masculinity for a third time. But this stereotype rejection is valid stuff, so let's count it as a foul ball, not a strike. The problem is that you've heard these non-conformity messages before. Maybe too many times. I know I have.

If one more avuncular psychologist tells me not to conform to a heartless masculine stereotype, I might lock myself in a room - just out of spite - and watch every Dirty Harry, every James Bond, and every Fast and Furious movie that was ever made. Look, I'm happy to coach other boys and men out of the Boy Code and the Man Box, but let it be known: I got out of that space a long time ago.

## Today's Man

So I'll take one more swing at it by describing the times when I felt most authentically masculine.

- I feel masculine when I'm hunting and gathering. I haven't slain any woolly mammoths lately, but it felt good to get new winter coats for my boys. All of the hard work that went into having the funds behind the credit card I inserted confidently into the machine came flooding back in a rewarding surge of dopamine. The "Thanks, Dad, for the awesome new coat." was all I needed to feel manly. To be clear, hunting and gathering is in service to others, not at the expense of others. Even verbal references to hunting and gathering other people, such as calling another male a "slayer" if he makes a romantic connection or referring to a white tank top as a "wife beater" are misogynistic, not masculine.

- I feel masculine when I'm visually and emotionally engaged. I'll spare you the measurement details, but it's a biological certainty that most males are more easily captivated by visual stimuli than most females. Some of this may be sociological, but the brain structures involved in male arousal are a bit different than those involved in female arousal. I recognize this is about as deep as Santa Claus saying he feels most Claus-like on Christmas, something the Tooth Fairy can't exactly relate to.

- I feel masculine when I'm guiding. When I tutor someone, fix something, or orchestrate an experience, it feels great. When I do it for someone else, I feel especially manly. I'm quite gratified when I can replace the icemaker, book a complicated travel itinerary for my family, or teach my son how to use the cross-cut sled I built for our table saw. For the women I've spoken with about these examples, such toils are pure psychic pain. For me, it's pure joy.

- I feel masculine when I keep my strength in check. Sure, it's true that most men have more upper body strength than most women. However, my friend Jessica is a competitive power lifter and my friend Michael is a quadriplegic. It's not the amount or type of strength that defines the man, it's the power to control it; to channel it in healthy directions. When



I exercise self-restraint, when I am gentle, tender, or measured, I feel as manly as when I split logs. So far, no women I've spoken with feel equally empowered by self-control and swinging a maul.

I'm closer now to defining a masculine ideal than I've ever come. I'm certain that hunting and gathering, visual captivation, fixing things, and balancing muscles with moderation are more characteristically masculine than feminine. These factors contribute to manhood. But none of them makes a boy or man truly great. And all of them may be true for certain females.

So here we are, at the end of our trek. We've discarded the bionic boy on magazine covers, climbed the emotional Everest of self-expression, identified ten gender-neutral virtues, and described four gender-specific attributes. I may have missed the mark, but I am suddenly struck with clarity and confidence.

The one thing that makes a great man - the one thing that no woman could do - is to gather all this advice and live it out, as a *man*, among the next generation of men. Great women are equally important, but they live their leadership in uniquely feminine ways.

Simply put: A great man understands that genuine masculinity is living what you want the boys in your school to become. Your sterling example - as someone who identifies as a man - will help them find their own masculine path. Ultimately, they will decide who they want to become. You can shape the *what* of your male students - their character, their convictions, and their charisma.

*Live what you want your boys to become* is not just a modern, masculine ideal. It is the living model with which boys can most closely identify. Owning that truth is the essence of manhood.



Dr. Christopher Thurber is a board-certified clinical psychologist who has worked in residential settings since 1983. He spent 33 summers working at an overnight camp in New Hampshire (US), where he lives with his wife and two boys, and 18 school years at Phillips Exeter Academy, a coeducational secondary school with 800 boarders.

An award-winning author, Chris has keynoted professional conferences on five continents. He enjoys sharing his reflections on leadership, youth development, and education as much as he enjoys learning from his colleagues, family, and students. Visit [DrChrisThurber.com](http://DrChrisThurber.com) to learn more.



## One Life, One Choice

How One Boy's Mistake is Helping Students to Make Informed Decisions about Drugs

### AUTHOR

David Hobbs  
Director  
Sideeffect

In 2013, Preston Bridge was a 16 year old student set to graduate from Churchlands Senior High School in Perth. He never made it.

Preston died after consuming a synthetic drug at the after party for his school ball. Preston made an uninformed decision that night which cost him his life. It is a similar decision that many school students face making throughout their school lives, but are they equipped to make an informed choice when that time comes?

*How do you reconcile one uninformed decision that can fatally change the destiny of a promising child and student?*

It is hard to imagine how you might respond as a parent to losing your child so unnecessarily. How do you reconcile one uninformed decision that can fatally change the destiny of a promising child and student, devastate a family and have such a sad and lasting impact on an entire school community? How do you prevent other children from making similar decisions that might cost more lives and devastate other families, schools and local communities?

Rodney Bridge, Preston's father, has responded by drawing meaningful purpose from this tragic event. Rodney could not save Preston's life, but his mission now, and Preston's legacy, is to help save the lives of other students facing a similar decision to that which cost Preston his life.

*"Our responsibility, as parents and carers, is to ensure they are equipped with the knowledge, awareness and confidence to make the right decision."*

"The decision that students make at that moment is in their hands" says Rodney. "We (parents) will not be there when this occurs. Our responsibility, as parents and carers, is to ensure they are equipped with the knowledge, awareness and confidence to make the right decision."



Rodney's contribution to this has been to establish Sideeffect, along with Business Executive David Hobbs and former West Coast Eagles football champion, Chris Waterman. Sideeffect is a not-for-profit organisation that provides drug education and awareness in schools. Their purpose is to educate students about the dangers of synthetic drugs with a hard hitting, graphic presentation that cuts through and resonates with students.

"Kids are playing Russian Roulette with their lives when they take illicit and synthetic drugs" says Rodney. "Our goal is to foster an open and frank discussion with students which stimulates discussion with their families and peers. Once they learn that synthetic drugs like meth have got battery acid, phosphorous, lime – all these things that you'd buy in a hardware store – it begins to sink in how risky they are and that they can so easily become fatal."

### One Life, One Choice

In July 2017, Sideeffect launched its One Life, One Choice program with the biggest one-day anti-drugs educational event in Australia at Churchlands Senior High School in Perth, Preston's school.

*80% of students talk to their parents and peers about what they have learned.*

Here 2,600 students participated in a powerful, potent and unforgettable presentation which sharpened awareness and educated participants about drugs. This program has now been experienced by more than 22,000 students and apprentices with remarkable outcomes.

Feedback from students that have attended the program shows that 80% of students

talk to their parents and peers about what they have learned. The general consensus is that One Life, One Choice is the best anti-drug message that they have ever heard, seen or read.

Sideeffect's strategy, with its confronting, informative and emotional presentation, emulates a strategy used by the successful Montana Meth Project in the USA. This project has been responsible for a 63% decline in teen meth use in Montana since 2005 and for Montana moving from the 5th largest Meth consuming city in the world to 39th in just 2 years.

The One Choice, One Life program has a lasting impact on students, changing life outcomes for many. The very graphic presentation is confronting and it's straight to the point method cuts through with students to build knowledge and understanding that alters the way they think about drugs now and for the rest of their lives.

In addition to the One Choice, One Life program, Sideeffect is also developing an online accreditation curriculum called the Orange Student Card. It has also built an interactive bus to take its presentation to the broader community.

On reflection, Sideeffect is another example of a sad but common irony that we too often see in life. The avoidable stealing of life from one family and community can become the spark for awareness and activity that saves the lives of many others. Sideeffect does this, in a way that has a lasting impact on students.

Whilst Preston Bridge's life ended prematurely due to an uneducated and poor decision, Preston's legacy, through Sideeffect, is to prevent thousands of other students from making the same potentially fatal mistake.

*Sideeffect is an Australian not-for-profit charity that works with schools to educate young people about synthetic drugs. Visit the website at [www.sideeffect.org.au](http://www.sideeffect.org.au) or contact Director David Hobbs on Ph: 0417 707 768 if you would like to discuss Sideeffect providing drug education at your school.*



Watch 60 Minutes Special Investigation with Rodney Bridge [www.sideeffect.org.au](http://www.sideeffect.org.au)

## Victorian Student Leadership Conference

### AUTHOR

Chris Van Styn  
Director of Boarding  
Ballarat Grammar &  
Tamara Westwood  
Housemaster  
St Patrick's College

On Wednesday 28 February, students and staff from boarding schools around Victoria converged on Ballarat for the Inaugural ABSA Victorian Student Leadership Conference. The event was co-hosted by Saint Patrick's College and Ballarat Grammar and we were fortunate to have been joined by 70 students and over 25 staff from 12 boarding communities around the state. Jake Bridges from Leading Teams Australia facilitated the morning session with a focus on student leadership in the boarding context, and the notion of support, empathy and acceptance of all within a group. Jake has worked extensively with school groups in addition to the work that he has done with AFLQ, Blueearth and most recently, with Leading Teams Australia. Those in attendance were able to examine and discuss how leadership looks within their own community, and reflect on the values and attributes of a leader, looking at their own leadership skills and talents. Those in attendance were then able to tour the new Saint Patrick's College boarding facilities, which opened at the commencement of 2018. Home to approximately 60 boarders, the student leaders proudly showed delegates throughout their new home and spoke eloquently of its journey through construction to completion.

The conference then shifted focus, and campus, to Ballarat Grammar, where students sampled a number of aspects of the School's Positive Psychology program, developing an understanding of the VIA Character Strengths and Mindfulness techniques; a rare sight indeed with a conference room full of calm, peaceful, meditating adolescents! Over lunch, those in attendance mixed with boarders from other schools and had the opportunity to discuss how each of their respective schools engaged in the common events and rituals



that each of our communities share in common; house meetings, homework, sleep and diet, boarders' activities, community spirit etc. This provided the group with a chance to exchange ideas that they could take away with them to further enhance their own communities. There was clearly much to discuss with lunch extending well into the afternoon! Our final guest speaker was Ian Barker, a past boarder from St Peter's Lutheran College, Queensland. Ian now manages a large commercial services company that employs over 1300 people around Australia. His company recently won their first international contract, the iconic Marina Bay Sands in Singapore. He is a past Young Manager of the Year Award recipient and attended Harvard Business School as a component of this award. Ian spoke with pride of his time in boarding and fondly of the friendships that he gained and maintains to this day. He discussed the skills and qualities that he took from his time in boarding and how these have served him so well throughout his adult life.

The afternoon concluded with tours through the Ballarat Grammar Boarding Precinct led again by student leaders who attended the conference. This provided delegates with an opportunity to look through the five boarding houses that are home to 235 boarders, before setting sail for home as they made their way back to their respective boarding communities. This event marks the beginning of what will be an important year for ABSA Vic, with a central focus for 2018 to create more

opportunities for our boarding students to attend ABSA events along with staff so that we truly do open our communities up to the boarders of Victoria. It is hoped that those in attendance at this conference were able to step away from the day with a real sense of a strong and thriving Victorian boarding community, along with an understanding of the important role that each of our boarders plays within this. New friendships were forged, new ideas imagined and shared, and hopefully all walked away, with a renewed energy about their own boarding experience.





## Cyber bullying

Why it Can Never be Eliminated?

### AUTHOR

Dr Michael Carr-Gregg  
Honorary Psychologist

It was her face that caught my attention, Dolly, aka Amy Jayne Everett, who at the age of six was the face of the iconic hat brand Akubra, beaming out her trillion-kilowatt smile. Incredibly she is now dead - having taken her own life after being cyber-bullied at the age of 14.

Her death generated horror and sadness in homes around Australia and the nation seemed to pause for a moment to grieve and then the grief gave way to anger, frustration at our helplessness in the face of this tragedy. Even the PM posted on Facebook saying his heart was breaking for Dolly and her family. "Dolly's passing highlights the devastating impact that bullying can have on its victims...every step must be taken to reduce the incidence of bullying, whether offline or on, and eliminate it wherever we can."

So can we ever eliminate online bullying? As a child and adolescent psychologist who has been dealing with the fallout of cyberbullying for decades, I fear that the answer is no and there are five major reasons:

1. Bill Belsey's 'perfect storm' - Bill was the first person to use the term cyber bully, and he speaks of the 'perfect storm' of the immature teenage brain combining with a technology that is of the moment and in the moment. Bill is referring to the fact that the human brain has 100 billion brain cells, 1000 trillion connections and they are not wired up yet. More importantly, between the age of 12 and young adulthood, there's a loss of this grey matter. It's losing perhaps 30,000 connections per second in a frenzy of brain remodelling. The last part of the brain to develop is the prefrontal lobe - in charge of planning, and impulse control. Essentially the brain brakes aren't yet developed, but the accelerator is flat to the floor - by puberty. Add to this a special vulnerability to peer pressure, a desire to be accepted, a lack of emotional empathy and the potential for cyberbullying is clearly present and unsurprisingly peaks around transition to high school.

2. Lack of parental supervision - it has been often said that there is no such thing as a perfect parent - and the number of adult carers who allow their children under the age of 13 on social media is growing. This is problematic as young children (for the reasons mentioned in point 1), often do not have the emotional, psychological or social maturity to manage a digital footprint or think before they click. In this age of laissez faire parenting, too many parents seem to have thrown in the digital towel, caved to pester power and are buying smart phones for their under 13 year olds. You can still have security and text messages with a dumb phone.

3. Lack of cybersafety education - in the UK, cybersafety education in primary schools is mandatory, yet in Australia where we have the eSmart school framework, which was developed by RMIT University in consultation with cyber safety, bullying, education and industry experts from across Australia, it is not. In 2010, eSmart was piloted in 159 schools across Australia with funding from the Commonwealth Department of Education. In some states like Victoria, the state government has made eSmart Schools available to every government school and 300 Catholic and independent schools at no charge. In addition each of these schools received a \$2,000 grant to assist in the implementation of the framework. An initiative of The Alannah and Madeline Foundation, the framework helps supports schools to embrace the benefits of technology and ensure they are doing everything possible to reduce students' exposure to cyber-risks. This must become mandatory in every primary school across Australia. Perhaps the PM could intervene here.

4. The social media companies - while some are doing some outstanding work in promoting the wellbeing of its users others are not. A few weeks ago, a 'cwebwerty' on YouTube called Logan Paul, with no less than six million followers took a camera crew into a primeval forest at the foot of Mount Fuji called Aokigahara. The forest is a known suicide hot spot and his crew stumbled upon someone who had taken their own life and proceeded to post a video of the body hanging from a tree for his tweenage fans. The clip was eventually taken down, but YouTube were mute for ten days before issuing an apology. In January last year a 12-year-old girl, Katelyn Nicole Davis, live-streamed her own death by hanging, after alleging she was abused by a relative. The video went viral and was replayed on many websites.

5. Anonymity - In the olden days, bullies were more easily identified. Back then, consequences ranged from being suspended from school to being banned from activities and venues, to even being arrested, but cyberbullies are more elusive. The apparent anonymity of the internet makes cyberbullies, especially children, bolder in their attacks, a kind of digital dutch courage. Albert Camus said, 'suicide, like a great work of art, is prepared within the silence of the heart' and indeed the reality is that no one will ever know precisely the nature and extent of Dolly's psychological demons. Nor will we know if she was suffering from a mental illness and the cyber bullying simply exacerbated it and acted as a trigger. But if we are to accede to Dolly's family's wishes the social media companies, parents, schools and the Federal and State governments can and should do more.

Dr Michael Carr-Gregg BA (Hons)  
MA, PhD MAPS Cert Child Internet Safety  
(UCLAN) Child and Adolescent Psychologist  
FOLLOW Michael on Twitter @MCG58  
www.michaelcarrgregg.com

## All Employed!

### AUTHOR

Jennifer Trybula  
Manager, Strategic Projects  
Tec-NQ

Tec-NQ's senior school serves a niche market in the boarding school arena. With an integrated focus on trade training and employability, Tec-NQ is the market leader amongst boarding schools in establishing work placement and apprenticeship opportunities.

The proof is evident. All of Tec-NQ's 2016-17 boarders attained apprenticeships across industries including sheet metal, automotive, diesel fitting, electrical and carpentry. Tec-NQ's block release work placement schedule enables boarders to participate in work placement regionally, like in their home communities where they can commit to employment long term. Rural Clermont boarder, Jake Luke, did work placement in Townsville, Clermont, Rockhampton and Emerald. He secured a full time diesel fitting apprenticeship with Komatsu in Emerald following graduation.

Maurice, Workshop Manager for Komatsu in Emerald stated, "Jake will be an exceptional apprentice. He came out for a few weeks of work placement as he completed Year 12. His performance and ability exceeded our expectations for a work experience student. I recommended he apply for the next apprentice intake."

Since introducing the boarding program in 2015, Tec-NQ has supported regional communities in establishing apprenticeship opportunities. The 2016-17 apprentices were employed by employers in Cairns, Mornington Island, Normanton, Ingham, Home Hill, Brisbane and Emerald.

Tec-NQ opened its boarding facility, the Tec-NQ House, in 2015 through a Regional Development Australia grant. The 44-bed facility has increased in enrolments year on year. "Because of the trade and VET focus of our Year 10, 11 and 12 senior school, we have to be selective about our boarding recruitments. It's not the right program for everyone, but for the right students, it's brilliant." says Jennifer Trybula, Manager, Strategic Projects.





## Study Tasmania's International Student Graduate of the Year

A First-Hand Account of Living and Working in Hobart

### AUTHOR

Suzie Han  
Deputy Director of Boarding  
Teacher of Chinese  
St Michael's Collegiate

In 2012, I arrived in Hobart to study teaching at UTAS. It was a daunting experience as my English was very poor and my cultural awareness was limited. I had to improve both skills rapidly to survive. I am proud that I managed to not only graduate, but also secure a job as a teacher in one of the finest schools in Australia. It has been a challenging, but rewarding - even life-changing journey - and I'd love to share a small part of it with you.

Hobart is actually the very first foreign city that I have ever been to. I chose Tasmania because one of my childhood friends is based here. When considering where I should study overseas, she said to me "You should come here Suzie, you would love it." She was right.

I still remember the day I first arrived Hobart. After being collected from the airport, and on my way to my friend's place, I saw a rainbow in the sky. I was so excited because the last time I had seen a rainbow was when I was six years old, back in China. It had been a full 20 years since I had seen a rainbow. I startled everyone in the car by shouting "Oh my gosh, it's a rainbow!" My friend who was in the car with me said "Oh calm down! It is just a rainbow. You will get used to it because there is a rainbow here every time it rains." She was right, there is a rainbow in Tasmania every time it rains.

When I arrived at my friend's house, she offered me some strawberries. I took one and had a bite. I yelled, again, "Oh my gosh, this is what strawberries tasted like when I was young!" Unfortunately, in China today, the strawberries don't taste like strawberries anymore. When I asked



for some water to drink, my friend just got me some tap water. I was literally in shock, because in China we don't drink water directly from the tap because tap water is not clean enough and gives you an upset tummy.

Another thing really surprised me when I first arrived was that every time I hopped onto a bus, there was a seat. 'Can you believe it?' I thought to myself. There was a seat, every single time. Where I came from in China, buses during peak hours are always very crowded and you would be lucky if you could even get onto the bus, let alone find a seat.

I quickly grew to love Tasmania. Every day, I enjoy its natural beauty, clean air, clean water, good food and the space. I feel I am so lucky to be here. But sometimes I also feel a little sad, because China was once like this as well.

My journey in Tasmania has not always been smooth sailing. Like anyone adjusting to a new country, I have experienced many challenges. My struggle with the language started right after I got off the plane. To give an example, when I was waiting in Sydney airport for my connecting flight to Hobart, I was very hungry and I needed food. I decided Hungry Jack's was a good option because I didn't have to ask for a menu and I could minimize the English

When I commenced my Masters degree at UTAS, I realised my English language abilities required a huge amount of improvement. I felt quite defeated and didn't know if I would survive the course. To overcome this enormous hurdle, I did two key things. Firstly, I spent almost all my spare time in the first year reading. The reason I had to spend that much time not only because I like to read a lot, it but because back then my reading was extremely slow. The second thing I did was to force myself to answer one question each lesson - it was an exercise in improving my communication skills and it pushed me outside of my comfort zone. Every time I answered a question during a class, I felt really down inside. Intellectually I am an adult, but what I was able to articulate at that time sounded like a five-year-old. The embarrassment was extremely overwhelming. I even felt I shouldn't be there at all.

Socially, it was difficult too. But I knew there was no better way to improve other than just to converse with others more often. So I started to initiate conversations with all my classmates. I normally started with 'How's your day?' or 'How was your weekend?' Then they would start telling me what's happening in their lives. Back then, I could only understand half of what they said, so I had to guess the meaning from their facial expressions and give responses accordingly. For example, if they looked a bit disappointed or sad, I would say 'Oh no!' or if they looked excited, I would say 'Oh wow!' I would always find an excuse to end the conversation early, before I felt they would find out that I didn't actually understand what's going on.

Now when I look back, I realise that these five years were the most difficult and intense period of time in my life, and this experience has changed me a lot. I was someone who feared of making mistakes and tried to avoid any challenges. After being forced to struggle through those challenges, I have learned that challenges and struggles are really good for me. I can step outside of my comfort zone and can now embrace learning something new. I am now a better version of myself.

I still experience fear when I face challenges, everyone does. And the amazing part of that is the more we do it, the weaker the fear of challenge becomes; it really does. We should really embrace all the struggles and see them as opportunities to improve. We also should celebrate all the mistakes, embarrassments and even failure; because they are the evidence of us trying and being brave. At least that is what I learned from my journey.





## The Boarding School Tutoring Program Changing Young Lives

**AUTHOR**  
Hayden McEvoy  
Founder and CEO  
A Team Tuition

At A Team Tuition, we are incredibly passionate about supporting boarding schools in the greatest ways possible, so as to help facilitate new levels of motivation, mentoring, and development for students. Hence why, when a local boarding school came to our company with a query concerning their young boarding house students, we jumped at the chance to provide additional support for their situation.

A potentially common concern for all boarding schools is the transition between home and boarding life, particularly for Year Seven and Eight students. The school itself was seeking to provide additional, innovative support from an outside source to supplement their immersion and to provide the students with a new element.

The combination of factors such as homesickness, a new and unfamiliar environment, and a heightened high school work load ultimately resulted in a struggle for the boys to focus on their homework and assessments, and caused a significant dip in the students' levels of motivation and participation outside of class.

It was paramount that a solution be presented; one that provided the most holistic approach and catered for a large group of students, whilst still focusing on the individual. The idea of convening an educational program was chosen, but multiple questions arose:

How do we exactly cater for a group, yet fit the program to the needs of an individual? How do we convene a program that helps dissolve the stress of a newfound high school environment, without creating additional work within the program? How on earth do we try to foster a sense of community and belonging to a bunch of teenage boys?

Most importantly, how do we create something that will actually cultivate change within a student, without being met by the same adversity that the students were already showing?

It may sound like a seemingly impossible task - but of course, we have always been passionate about achieving the impossible.

### A Presented Solution

Upon receiving the request, A Team immediately consulted with the company's psychologist as to the development requirements of young teenage boys. Immediately the idea was put forth to move from a prep-study like structure - wherein students would sit in rows and not speak to one another - to a group activity based structure. Doing this would help to foster a sense of support and belonging between the young students.

The overall aim of the program was to first provide a base support structure for the new high school students; once this was established, the students would be taught specific strategies that would help propel them towards academic success.

To do so, the program would run for an entire term, and focus specifically on tutoring and mentoring young Year Seven and Eight boys. Each term would feature an overarching theme, such as goal setting and time management, how to engage in class, or how to tackle exams. These themes would continue for two years (eight terms), starting from the beginning of a Year Seven boy's life, and finish at the end of Year Eight.

The program consisted of approximately 80 students across Years Seven and Eight, with five tutors and one group leader per year level. The groups themselves would feature eight students, but could also be split themselves into smaller sub-groups for more productive learning, depending on the students.

Sessions would specifically begin with the tutors speaking to the boys personally about their weeks, and allowing them to off-load any issues or concerns they had. Often, a short activity based around the term's theme would be held; once this was done, the groups would split off and get into the specifics of their homework and assessments. Their tutor would be right alongside them, offering guidance and support for any questions, queries, or struggles the students may have.

Most important to the program, however, was the inclusion of a points based system into the young boys' learning experience. Early on, the study groups were tasked with creating their own specific group name; from thereon, each group had the opportunity to earn points as a team in a number of different areas. The criteria for points would be focused around elements such as creativity, time management, productivity, participation, and so on.

The points would be utilized at the end of each term for a specific fun activity, such as a water bomb fight, a treasure hunt, an escape room, and so forth. The more points each group had accrued, the more water bombs or clues they would receive (depending on the activity).

### So What's The Point of All This?

It can be difficult when recounting the process of the program to see the exact, specific effects it had on students. However, one has to consider the purpose behind each choice and feature in the program.

As aforementioned, moving away from rows of silent students was specifically done to help create an environment that provided copious opportunities for students to interact with one another, creating a sense of community. However, the true key lies in the formation of the groups as specific teams, with their own chosen name, logo design, and motivation for each team.

Doing this does more than make students feel supported by their peers and a leader; it creates an intrinsic sense of belonging and acceptance, as each group member



works together to achieve points. They are moved to encourage one another and build upon their collective strengths, whilst covering for each other's weaknesses. This then had the potential to move beyond the program timeslot, and affect the students' overall boarding school experience - thereby fulfilling the primary aim of the program.

The secondary aim of the program focused specifically on the academic strategies that students needed to build before moving into higher years of high school. However, before considering teaching academic strategies to students, it is imperative to establish a base of intrinsic motivation - where a student finds themselves wanting to learn and improve, rather than simply focusing on achieving grades or handing pieces of work in.

The point system was also created to reward students' effort over the outcomes. The more they worked together on the process of being a successful student (for example, doing homework on time, taking notes, completing challenge questions, and so forth). This taught the students that good outcomes aren't the result of being 'smart' or talented - they are the result of working both hard and smart.

Having a group of tutors facilitating the activities furthermore helped build a lasting impact on how students would see educational authority figures. A Team Tuition boarding school program tutors were specifically chosen according to their skill set and strengths, so as to allow these skills to transfer to the students. This included traits such as being independent, reliable, self-motivated, and confident, as well as the ability to problem solve and achieve goals. Seeing tutors exhibit these traits specifically allowed students to become more aware to the experiences of their own teachers, and the effort that educators put into assisting even larger groups of students every day.

In essence, allowing their tutors to lead their groups slowly moved the students to understand that educational facilitators solely aim to help improve their lives.

The tutors themselves worked to instill key beliefs in students lives, affirming that students were capable, responsible, and supported. It is these key beliefs that allowed students to take actions that produced results.



## The Aquinas College Relay for Life

### AUTHOR

Michael Dempsey  
Deputy Principal  
Aquinas College, Perth

The Aquinas College Relay for Life has raised nearly \$50,000 for cancer research since its inaugural run in 2014. The College was awarded the 2017 Relay for Life Innovation Award at this year's Cancer Council Relay for Life Awards night in recognition of its effort to bring the WA boarding community together to support the Cancer Council.

The Aquinas Relay for Life involves boarders (and some day students) from across WA's boarding schools descending on the College for a night of fun, fundraising, exercise and reflection. 800 - 1000 students from schools including; Guildford Grammar School, Edmund Rice College, Penhros College, St Mary's Anglican Girls School, Santa Maria College, Perth College, Iona Presentation College, Scotch College, St Hilda's Anglican School for Girls, Hale School, Presbyterian Ladies' College and St Bridget's College take part in the condensed version of the traditional Relay for Life over a five-hour period. The night is full of enthusiasm, anticipation and determination as teams compete in a fun environment to complete laps of the course by running, jumping, dancing and in any other way they can think of moving.

Lapping the track is only part of the fundraising event, with students using their high energy levels to face off in the Dance for Life – a great dance off between the schools aimed at bringing students together in a non-threatening environment to compete against one another in an enjoyable way. Each boarding school is paired with a school of the opposite sex at the start of the evening and the group then has to choreograph their dance off routine for the performance later that night. Watching the Aquinas Year Seven students strut their stuff to Taylor Swift's "Shake It Up" was a memorable highlight of the 2015 event.

The students also challenge one another in the Herb Elliot Relay Race. The lap racing stops when students take part in this annual competition in which they aim to beat the clock and Old Aquinian and Olympian Herb Elliot's record 3 min 35.6 secs. Students form teams of six and race 250m each. Teams have come very close to matching Herb's elusive record but are yet to reach or surpass it during the event.

A volleyball competition is also held between the teams on the night. The court is set up in the middle of the track. With volleyball games, students running and dancing the track, music playing and commentary from the MCs streaming through speakers around Memorial Oval, the night is full of positive energy, fun and good times for students, staff and parent volunteers alike.

There is always a great support team of parent volunteers who help out at the annual Relay. The event would not operate as effectively and efficiently as it does without them and their vital support. We are always extremely grateful to parents for giving their time and travelling to the College to support the event.

The Aquinas Relay for Life has been an amazingly rewarding event for students over the past four years. It's a wonderful opportunity for students from across WA to come together and be involved in a positive service to others. Students get a chance to socialise with other boarders, friends and family members from other schools at a recreation event which



### The Impact

At the end of the program, a feedback survey was sent to all Year Seven Students who completed the program. These students, who had gradually become autonomous learners, were then able to assess not only themselves and their progress, but also the features of the program itself.

Overall, 85% of the students preferred the program over individual quiet study sessions; 75% of students believed that it profoundly impacted their assessments and quality of understanding.

The largest majority of students believed that the program was perfectly tailored for them, and that they preferred everything to stay as it was; a large portion of the remaining students simply requested that whilst the program was wonderful, they wanted to spend additional time inside the program (specifically to spend even more time with their allocated tutors).

Additional surveillance showed that the students achieved a boost in their overall grades - not to mention that the program had an extreme impact on the students' motivation levels, confidence, and peer-to-peer relationships.

Overall, the aim of the program was not only realised, but additionally achieved over and above its intended purpose. Our main motivation was to help inspire personal and academic transformation in students. The most important outcome of any program is always providing students with the skills to control their learning - both fundamental, critical elements for a young student's life.

We are honoured to have been a part of the students' journey, and have ourselves been significantly impacted by their effort and drive along the way. In our eyes, these students are the future; it is our responsibility to help lead and guide, until it is finally time for them to fly free.

is a wholesome activity aimed at helping others in the broader community.

The Aquinas Relay for Life involves encouraging students to take part in serving their community by fundraising for an important cause. Aquinas students raise funds by doing odd-jobs or working for donations, gaining sponsorships or door-knocking with supervisors in the local neighbourhood. Students are unable to take the "easy way out" and ask their parents to pay a donation to the cause, rather they are required to reach beyond their comfort zones and use initiative to try to raise funds.

Students are also encouraged to reflect on the impact cancer has in their communities as part of the Relay event. A guest speaker is invited to speak to students about their personal experience with cancer and the way it changed their lives. In 2016, Guildford Grammar's Brad Evans shared his story of his battle with bowel cancer shortly after the birth of his child several years ago. Two operations and rounds of chemotherapy and radiotherapy were part of Brad's journey to recovery. His story was very relevant to students and quite personal as many knew him through their boarding experiences.

The annual Relay for Life evening comes to an end with a candle ceremony. Memorial Oval becomes a sea of flickering lights as hundreds of students hold their solitary electric candles in hand and solemnly lap the oval in quiet reflection of their personal experiences with cancer. This tribute to those they have lost, those who are battling and those who have survived is a fitting way to finish the event, linking WA's teenage boarding students together to do their bit for a better tomorrow.



# BEGINNING WITH A BANG.

It's already March, can you believe it, and we are well in to the first term of 2018!

It has been a very busy and successful start to the New Year for the Chartwells team with a number of mobilisations nationally. We have started boarding, retail and function catering at Ipswich Grammar School in Brisbane in addition to boarding and functions at Wenona School.

In Sydney we have mobilised 6 residential University Colleges at University of New South Wales (Kensington College) including Goldstein, UNSW Hall and International House with over 1000 students per sitting. The feedback from the students has been amazing - see the following page for their comments from our "Comments Book"

For us, being able to cater for residential students as they make their journey from secondary school through to University is a rewarding and fulfilling one as often we are catering for these students for up to 9 years of their lives.

One thing is consistent during this time and that is our focus on providing a warm and engaging environment along with a focus on smart food and choice. Our role, as caterer, is integral to the happiness and wellbeing of the students and we take this seriously.

At the end of the day we are often responsible for up to 95% of their daily food intake and, as such, we go to great lengths to ensure that our menus meet the criteria and guidelines of our smart food program. An 80% minimum ratio of freshly prepared to bought in product underpins this, as does a focus on seasonal produce and minimisation of fats and sugars.

The relationship between a balanced and sustaining diet with healthy sleeping patterns and mental and physical output cannot be underestimated and the research in to the correlation between poor diet, lack of sleep and mental health issues is compelling.

Our creation of revitalised dining environments, warm and homely spaces and colourful counters of freshly prepared and batch cooked menu items can genuinely influence the day and this is what we love about what we do.

We look forward to making a positive difference to the thousands of boarders that we will cater for this year and want to reassure you of just how important this is for us all.



Date: 31/01/18  
Customer Name: [redacted]  
Comments: AMAZING!!! The food is so tasty and fresh, and the set-up is so aesthetically pleasing - I feel like I am in a restaurant! Thank you! ☺

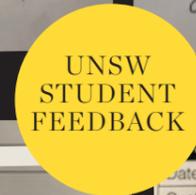
Date: 1.02.18  
Customer Name: [redacted]  
Comments: Love the healthier options of breads and the granola range was so good!

Date: 31/01/18  
Customer Name: [redacted]  
Comments: Great!

Date: 1-2-18  
Customer Name: [redacted]  
Comments: Maybe @ 7.10 later time closer, announce that seconds can be taken/ prepped away to avoid food wastage and allow. We love packing seconds.

Date: 31/01/2018  
Customer Name: [redacted]  
Comments: Veg meal was delicious ♡♡♡

Date: 1/02/18  
Customer Name: [redacted]  
Comments: loved the Vegan food! - Just wondering if there are any vegan desserts? \*



Date: 02.2.18  
Customer Name: [redacted]  
Comments: Amazing food again- so fresh and tasty! I am loving dessert every day too ☺

Customer COMMENT  
Date: 31/1/18  
Customer Name: [redacted]  
Comments: Excellent food, decoration and service 😊

Date: 02.2.18  
Customer Name: [redacted]  
Comments: Please Dont mess this up ♡

Date: 31/1/18  
Customer Name: [redacted]  
Comments: loved it, food is tasty and decoration are lovely, keep it up! (ITP)

Date: [redacted]  
Customer Name: [redacted]  
Comments: Good food, happy it changed ♡xoxo

Date: 31/1/18  
Customer Name: [redacted]  
Comments: AWESOME!! - would love takeaway containers - Can we eat the bread

For further details on how we can help you, please contact:

George Michaelides  
Director, Business Development  
Chartwells | 0404 000 931



## The Sleep Connection:

Improve the Health, Resilience and Performance of your School and your Boarding House

### AUTHOR

Lisa Maltman  
The Sleep Connection  
[www.thesleepconnection.com.au](http://www.thesleepconnection.com.au)

*Are your students among the 70% of Australian teenagers who are sleep deprived?*



What if there was a virus going around your boarding house affecting Seven out Ten students? What if that virus had an adverse affect on: physical development; emotional and mental health; behaviour and motivation; and lastly, learning and academic performance?

These effects are occurring now, not through a virus but an equally virulent epidemic that is sweeping through Australian schools. Sleep Deprivation. The good news is that, unlike many viruses, we know the simple cause and effects of sleep deprivation and can take action now to deliver a cure. Even better news is that improving the situation for boarding students is far easier than for the rest of the school.

### Why is sleep deprivation such an issue?

Sleep, nutrition and exercise are core pillars of a healthy life, but sleep will impair function fastest if you don't get enough. Schools are increasingly noticing the impact on all areas of students' lives including:

- **Learning and academic performance:** sleep helps concentration and motivation along with consolidation and strengthening of new information and memories.
- **Emotional and mental health:** studies show children who are sleep deprived are more likely to suffer from depression, anxiety, negative body image and low self-esteem.
- **Behaviour and decision making:** sleep deprivation affects decision making capacity, has a negative effect on behaviour and relationships, and increases risk of accidents.
- **Body systems:** sleep deprivation affects children's physical growth, brain development, immune system and plays a key role in weight gain.

### Why are our students not getting the sleep they need?

The top 4 reasons students give me for their lack of sleep are:

- **Technology/FOMO (social media, gaming, Netflix, YouTube)**
- **Homework/study**
- **Busy lifestyle combined with poor time management and procrastination**
- **Stress**

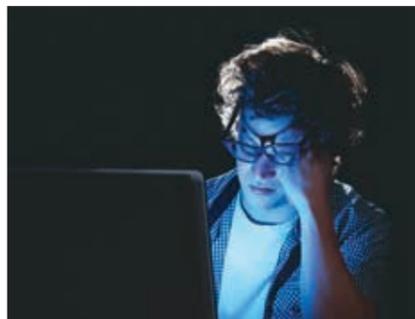
In a boarding house there are the additional issues of: noise from other students; lights; and alarms going off at different times for early morning sport etc.

The other reason we must not forget is that most teenagers have a late body clock. This is the normal tendency for many teenagers to fall asleep later than children and adults, due to the delay in onset of their sleep hormone, melatonin. The above four reason contribute further to a late body clock.

For some teenagers this can become a problem known as Delayed Sleep Phase Disorder (DSPS). This along with other sleep disorders such as psychological insomnia, excessive snoring and obstructive sleep apnea (OSA), may require professional help.

For more information visit:

[www.thesleepconnection.com.au/sleep-for-children-teenagers](http://www.thesleepconnection.com.au/sleep-for-children-teenagers)  
and [www.thesleepconnection.com.au/solutions](http://www.thesleepconnection.com.au/solutions)



### How much sleep do our students need?

Dr Chris Seton from the SleepShack says the best way to judge how much sleep a student needs is to assess whether it's "enough for them to wake spontaneously" - meaning without an alarm clock - "on most mornings and avoid tiredness during the day at least until the last hour before bedtime".

The National Sleep Foundation recommends 8-10hrs for teens (13-17 years old).

### How do we identify students who are sleep deprived?

School is possibly the foremost area dealing with symptoms of sleep deprivation:

- Tired body language
- Difficulties concentrating, poor short term memory, declining grades
- Moody and stressed
- Late for school
- Impact on relationships
- Younger children can exhibit symptoms of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), becoming excitable, hyperactive, disagreeable and engaging in extreme behaviours like tantrums or aggression.

For others signs visit:

[www.thesleepconnection.com.au/sleep-for-children-teenagers](http://www.thesleepconnection.com.au/sleep-for-children-teenagers)

### What can we do to raise awareness and support our students?

Positive communication is key. The first step is to create an awareness of the current level of sleep deprivation among students and the effect this is having on all aspects of their lives. Start by initiating conversation on the topic with your staff and students, along with implementing a simple survey.

Sharing some practical sleep tips with your students, staff and parents is also a great way to start:

1. Prioritise your sleep and create a regular sleep/wake routine.
2. Improve your time management skills.
3. Clear your mind by setting aside thinking and planning time prior to winding down.
4. Have a one hour break between study and sleep.
5. Have a one hour break between electronic devices and sleep.
6. Keep your bedroom an electronics free zone.
7. Keep your bedroom dark, quiet and the right temperature for sleeping.
8. Expose yourself to bright light in the morning and dim light at night.
9. Keep pen and paper beside bed to write down anything that pops up in your mind that may concern you and keep you awake if you don't write it down.
10. Choose healthy food and drink and avoid caffeine at least 6 hours before bed.
11. Exercise daily, but not too close to bedtime.
12. Have a relaxing pre-bed wind down routine.
13. Limit weekend sleep ins.
14. Get rid of the snooze button.
15. Don't lie awake in bed feeling stressed or frustrated. Try to do something to calm down and then give sleep another go.

The next step is to develop a "sleep smart" school culture by providing a simple whole-school approach to sleep education. The influence of sleep on our children's learning as well as their physical and emotional health is unequivocal and education provides a key for change.

Talk to The Sleep Connection regarding further tips to create a "sleep smart" school and boarding house along with education workshops for your boarding house.

**IMPORTANT:** Seek advice from a health professional if you remain concerned that problems with sleep, however mild, are having an impact on you in terms of wellbeing, school, relationships or home life then seek advice and see below for both online and face to face

### In school

Sleep for Better Health, Resilience and Performance" is a school program for boarding houses along with programs for days students, parents, teachers and wellbeing staff.

For more information visit:

[www.thesleepconnection.com.au](http://www.thesleepconnection.com.au) and [www.thesleepconnection.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/The\\_Sleep\\_Connection\\_Program\\_Overview\\_Online.pdf](http://www.thesleepconnection.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/The_Sleep_Connection_Program_Overview_Online.pdf)

### Online

SleepShack is the clinically proven, online sleep program for pre-teens\* (10-12 years) and teenagers (13-18 years). If you have any questions regarding the correct pathway simply email:

[hello@sleepshack.com.au](mailto:hello@sleepshack.com.au)

For more information visit:

[www.sleepshack.com.au](http://www.sleepshack.com.au)



## Fans of the Flame

### AUTHOR

Mike Symons  
Housemaster  
Macarthur Waddy House,  
The King's School

In fire, weapons are forged. In fire, food is made. In fire, miracles occur. Now, I'm not suggesting there are literal miracles occurring in North Parramatta but the return to the more 'old school' Saturday nights around the firepit are reaping rewards for the boys of Macarthur Waddy boarding house at TKS.

Luckily, the stunning deck outlook of our house looks almost due north, allowing the sun to rise on our right and set on our left. The grassy knoll slopes down to the bush at a decent gradient and one of the young lads suggested that we could level off a portion of the slope, create a natural earth platform and create a firepit.

Work started in September of 2016 and, with the help of fathers and their trusty chainsaws, bush furniture was made, river granite and cement were mixed to form the bedrock and two Industrial Arts students, Will Campbell and George Weber, created a steel firepit, resplendent with laser-cut monograms.

The effect was breathtaking. The ghost and scribbly gums frame the pit, like a protective lioness. The granite is a deep red, blending beautifully with the landscape. The bush furniture provides a unique and earthy feel to contrast the rustic steel and, come Saturday night, a little section of our school comes to life.

The students take ownership of the setting up of the fire and ensure some days prior that suitable kindling and logs are dry and out of the way of the elements. Under the close supervision of staff, the boys set it up and, while that may seem simple, an old Dutch method of setting up a fire has proven to be the most effective – but this, like most things in a boarding house, was not without contention.



After an officially unofficial blessing of the Firepit by Kings' Old Boy and rascal, Terry Reid, sparks flew and flames were fed.

Around the fire, amazing things happen. We knew of the potential benefits of the 'vertical' boarding system, being one of the remaining independent boarding schools still espousing this in our boarding houses. But never has such an inclusive and clarion example been seen as when around the firepit. In the flickering flames, ages became irrelevant and year groups were invisible. There was something very elemental about the setting, and, while excitement and joy were visibly high, there was also a pervading calmness. A relaxed confidence where, for a few brief hours, the machismo of adolescent boys seemed to recede and we were all just souls by an orange fire.

Since that initial evening, we've had many nights around the pit, slow-cooking stews on the coals, roasting marinated spatchcock and lamb fillets and the obligatory marshmallows on sticks. We've had mothers and fathers flameside, joined by our school's executive and a couple of family dogs. But one of the most enjoyable sights has been the boys of Macarthur Waddy house nursing their younger brothers and sisters on their laps, showing them about the power and danger of fire and letting them come together in the spirit of community.

We've recently added a 44-gallon drum built on sandstone and red river granite that doubles as a wood-fired BBQ and smoker - depending on our palates - and, come next weekend, we will also be installing a vertical smoker by the firepit. It has several levels and, based on the design from an Indigenous Australian in the top end, will be able to smoke, grill, bake and roast all at once. 2018 House Captain, Gery Lefebvre has designed and built this one and, like the firepit and horizontal smoker, has the initials of those young men whose vision for fun, fraternity and family is being realised, engraved into them.

To all those boarding communities with the space and safety requirements to build such a space, it is a relatively simple process and can be done with levels of engagement and enjoyment not seen since the building of Sputnik.

If anyone would like more information or advice, please drop me an email at [mps@kings.edu.au](mailto:mps@kings.edu.au)

## Boarding Leaders' Network at Santa Maria College

### AUTHOR

Andrea Dopson  
Head of Boarding  
Santa Maria College



Networking is a very effective way of interacting with others to exchange information and develop professional or social contacts. We all know this but it is often difficult to make the time to network when you are a student in a boarding college community.

Recently, Santa Maria College, Attadale in Perth hosted a Year 12 Boarding Leaders' Dinner to promote camaraderie and networking. Over 90 Leaders from 15 boarding colleges throughout Perth gathered in the Recreation Centre to appreciate the view of the Swan River, share drinks and cheese, and engage in conversation and networking with other leaders. A very lively and loud scenario indeed!

Later dinner was taken in the newly refurbished Dining Hall where a guest speaker, Ms Jessica Hicks, spoke to the Leaders. During her talk, Jessica spoke of the opportunities offered to her throughout her schooling and post graduate studies. She offered the Leaders a few tips on how to make the most of their time prior to leaving school. She focussed on goal setting and offered the following tips for reaching your goal.

- You have to want it
- You have to be committed and consistent
- You need to balance all aspects of your life - study, social, physical and mental aspects
- You need to value friendships
- You need to appreciate the significance of networking
- You need to be flexible when things are not going according to plan
- You should celebrate completion of tasks and reward yourself with little treats often
- You should let your goals grow you.

Jessica left the Leaders with the following quote "I am, I can and I will" to inspire them further in their life journeys.

The Year 12 Leaders from Santa Maria College thank the visiting schools for participating in this worthwhile endeavour and hope to make the Dinner an annual event.



## Real First Aid

**AUTHOR**  
Leonie Jongenelis  
Head of Boarding  
St Hilda's Anglican Girls School, Perth

At the end of every school year the St Hilda's Anglican School for Girls in Mosman Park, Perth, WA boarding staff undertake either a CPR refresher or full Senior First Aid course to keep our skills up to date. This training is usually undertaken in a class room with a trainer talking through the content. This year training took on a totally fresh, exciting and challenging perspective. 'Real First Aid' were exactly as their name indicates, emergency scenarios were set up using fake blood, fake wounds, sensory distractors such as smells and smoke, and a Telecentre call service simulating a real 000 call. The scenarios were all very believable and set in and around our boarding house, in the environment staff would be dealing with these issues on any given day.

Most of the boarding staff have renewed their First Aid numerous times, but this was the first time they have had to perform in settings which demanded bringing together all the skills required to effectively manage a critical incident in a realistic environment. They were required to deal with the direct emergency as well as crowd control of students, bystanders and other staff. The simulation training certainly had the staff experiencing the pressure of an emergency, with many staff admitting that the scenarios were so real that they even experienced an adrenalin rush whilst responding to the emergency.

Following each simulation exercise, staff reflected on the outcomes, considered alternative responses and talked through possible similar scenarios in a boarding environment. Under the tuition of our very knowledgeable trainer, 'Renee', we worked through effective responses to an emergency, whilst working together as team - as staff would in a real life emergency in the boarding house. Some of the scenarios managed by staff included a car accident in the boarding house car park resulting in a number of casualties, one of whom required CPR and another with an arterial bleed, there seriously was blood everywhere - very confronting! This was followed up with a kitchen incident which involved a burn victim, a casualty who had accidentally amputated her finger, and a further casualty had slipped in a bathroom whilst carrying her glass water bottle resulting in a piece of glass protruding from her arm. Staff also managed a casualty who was experiencing convulsions, with actual froth at the mouth and life like smells and mess that might be part of an incident of this nature. Two of these scenarios were based on incidents that had actually occurred in our boarding house in the past.



The realistic emergency scenarios certainly put staff to the test and by the end of the training everyone indicated they felt much more confident to deal with any emergency that they may be confronted with. Staff also believed that the scenarios have helped with teams recognising the roles individuals need to play within the team to ensure emergencies are dealt with quickly, efficiently and without increasing the trauma of such an event. I would highly recommend 'real first aid' to every workplace that requires first aid training.

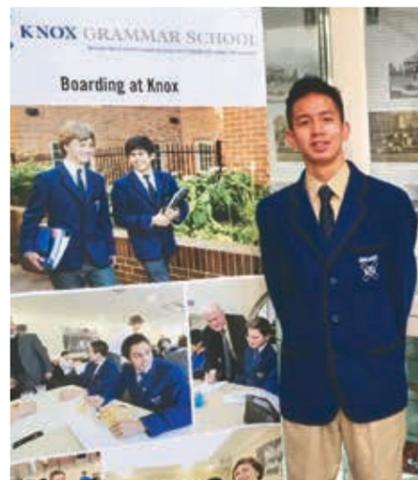
It was a very rewarding and enjoyable experience with staff agreeing that it was once of the best training days they had ever experienced.

# An Effective International Boarders' Immersion Program – Knox's Story

## AUTHOR

Brian Sullivan  
Head of Boarding  
Knox Grammar School

## Supporting Our International Boarders' Transition into our Australian Education System and Boarding Culture at Knox



Knox Boarding



Brian Sullivan with Lewis and Dylan

An Australian Education is a precious commodity. It is highly desirable and one of the largest contributors to our Australian GDP each year. An Australian education is viewed by overseas families as providing excellent Secondary and Tertiary pathways for their children. Knox Grammar School itself has a strong tradition of boarding since its inception in 1924. Over the past 93 years, rural and regional families, and international families, have wanted their sons to board and be educated at Knox, a diversity of which we are very proud.

Whether it be Gilgandra or Guangzhou, Condobolin or Cambodia, families seek a holistic approach, encompassing both academic and social development, independence as well as community. Integral to this is an evolving approach to learning, and cultural awareness. Following intensive research in Australia, and the United Kingdom, Knox made significant changes to the accommodation, programmes and culture of its boarding. In 2018, Knox will have its largest boarding intake in decades with 211 boarders, a measure of the success of what we call, "Next Generation Boarding".

Of this number, approximately 28% are from International families. I have always had great admiration for our International boarders who have to leave their families, travel overseas to live in a new country, experience for the first time a new educational system where English in most cases is their second language, and within a new boarding culture. This requires great courage, resilience and sacrifice for these boarders, and it is not surprising that, at times, they struggle initially in coming to terms with both the Australian and their own cultural and educational differences. I found that this certainly resonates with many of my fellow Heads and Directors of Boarding. Through discussions at conferences over the years, typical questions asked include, "How do you support your International boarders?" "How do you integrate your International boarders into your boarding culture?" "How do you integrate your International students with your regional boarders?"

However, a further catalyst for change occurred in 2015/2016 when I was invited by my Headmaster, John Weeks, to take part in the highly regarded 'AIS Flagship Leadership Course'. As part of this demanding year long course we were required to develop a 'Whole School Project' supported by our Headmaster/Principal and finally presented to all the course delegates and sponsors at the end of the course. The Project I chose was to develop, implement and run 'The Knox International Boarders Immersion Program'. That was my hope! However, knowing the struggles and experiences faced by many schools supporting their International boarders, I knew it would require a great deal of planning, vision and teamwork from key stakeholders at Knox.

We are fortunate to have highly experienced and knowledgeable staff in enrolments and in boarding, as well as very close relationships with our past, present and future international students and families. The result was an intensive period of consultation and review, before the Headmaster gave his approval to implement the first Knox International Boarders Immersion Program, to be run over Term Four in 2016. For our very first Program, we had a great intake of 12 International boarders, all boys who required intensive English Language classes at the Sydney College of English to improve their standard of English before starting in their mainstream Knox academic classes and boarding at the start of 2017.

In previous years, we would not have seen these boys at all until every boarder arrived back to Knox for the start of academic year. Therefore, this new program provided these 12 International boarders with ten weeks Knox experience which would previously not have been possible!

This period proved, as expected, to be critical, as it allowed the boys to both undertake their English classes, as well experience life at Knox, thus ensuring that there was continuity between home and Knox, study and Knox, and a relaxed mixing with current boarding students, many rural and regional, who were to become their cohort, colleagues and community.

Also critical was the decision by the Headmaster to support the appointment of an Immersion Co-ordinator to manage the 'day to day' running of the program. We were very fortunate to appoint the existing Boarding House Manager of Stage 5, Ms Erinn Cooper, who combined her existing role with this new exciting position. Erinn co-ordinated the communications required between International boarders involved in the course and their parents, was the first port of call working with Knox teaching staff and staff of Sydney College of English, as well as organising the timetables, co-curricular involvement and excursions for the students.

### Key Aspects of the Knox International Boarders Immersion Program

As mentioned above, the key element of the programme was to allow the students to experience Knox; the Knox they and their parents had decided was to be their pathway, without the awkward "gap" where they were away from home, but not at Knox, studying English in isolation. Hence,

- The students attended two full days at Knox and three days at Sydney College of English, each week over the ten weeks of term four.
- In partnership with the SCE to provided specialist ESL teachers to teach our boys to continue their Intensive English Language lessons within one our boarding houses over the two days they needed to be at Knox.
- Half of this first intake experienced boarding at Knox while the rest had prearranged Home Stay and commuted to Knox and SCE during the program.
- During the two days at Knox, having registered with Ms Cooper at 8am, the students would experience the full life at Knox, academically, in co-curricular activities, and even in day-to-day administration. They received individual timetables, and, together with a boarding buddy to support them, attended STEM and electives classes. The boys had to take part in the lessons and take notes and review later the use of English in the context of each subject.
- They attended Mentor Sessions (Tutor Groups), so they experienced the 'Knox Total Fitness Model' on Positive Psychology.
- They attended Year Group Chapel Service and Year Group Assembly.
- They attended a chosen sports session with Knox Staff.
- They attended recess and lunch breaks within our Boarders in Dining Hall.
- They took part in sessions on Positivity Project on Positive Psychology and Growth Mindset delivered by our outside provider, designed specifically for our International Boarders.
- They were required to attend a weekend away to Canberra, to experience aspects of the Australian Culture - visiting the Australian War Memorial and The Australian Federal Parliament and to allow key boarding staff to get to know these boys.
- Each day at Knox they would be required to complete a written journal log on each lesson and the day's experiences, which was collected and marked by Ms Cooper.
- In consultation with SCE we tracked these boys, progress and reports with their English classes and sent progress reports to their parents. This was a very effective way of both encouraging and monitoring, as well as very reassuring for parents, so far away.
- Each of the boys completed a survey at the end of the term on the program.
- We had a wonderful 'Celebration Dinner' at which we presented certificates of completion of the program to each International boarder.



Cultural Visit to Canberra and The Parliament House



Knox Grammar School - Immersion Boarder studying at his desk  
photo courtesy of Daniel Boud

### Knox Boarders Immersion Program - 'Personal Reflection'

by Peter Huang Year Ten Boarder

I have attended the immersion program towards the end of 2016. It was a very good time staying at Knox and going to class in both Knox and Sydney College of English (SCE). We spent Monday and Tuesday at Knox and rest of the week in SCE. I definitely need to thank all boarding staff for taking care of us and for helping us to adjust to this brand-new environment. They had provided us so much help to get us to fit right in at Knox both in the day school and in boarding. Speaking of day school, we attend four lessons every week. It was very helpful for us to experience the transition of education before we started school officially. Moreover, I really like the way that we could attend period seven sports, as I enjoyed playing basketball so much. Playing sports is actually a great way to make new friends in at Knox for us and I was so lucky to meet many friendly boys who offered to help me at Knox while playing basketball. The most intriguing and unforgettable experience during this time has to be the Canberra trip with other Immersion boys and boarding staff. We visited the Australian Parliament, War Memorial and Questacon and really benefitted a lot from learning about Australian politics and history. All in all, to me, the Immersion program was fantastic. Thanks to all the staffs here who brought me this incredible experience and help me fit in at Knox. It was such a great time here and I would definitely recommend students that are coming to Knox to join the exceptional Immersion Program.



Celebration Dinner at the end of the Program and Presentation of Certificates Presented by Director of Enrolments Martin Gooding, and supported by Boarding Executive Officer Fiona Sullivan, Erinn Cooper, Mrs. Gooding, and Brian Sullivan.



Knox Boarding - Gavin at the Agricultural Lesson photo courtesy of Blue Murder Studios



Our First Group of International Immersion Boarders at a special welcome Morning Tea with The Headmaster John Weeks, Mrs Weeks, Deputy Headmaster Scott James, Immersions Program Coordinator Erin Cooper and Brian Sullivan.

## Conclusion and Summary

At the conclusion of this first program the feedback we received from both the boys involved and their parents was overwhelmingly positive. We have now seen these first 12 boys start in 2017 academic mainstream classes extremely confident, with many established friends, familiar with our Boarding routines and expectations, and very confident with their surroundings in the day school. These boys were very relaxed and engaging from the very start of Term One, 2017.

## How did we improve our Immersion Program for the new International Boarders starting later in 2017?

- We have now started the Program in Terms Three to allow more time for those International boarders who need up to 24 weeks of intensive English Language Classes to improve their English capabilities and who would then join those new boys starting in Term four.
- We increased the operational time of our Co-Ordinator Erinn Cooper to work six months of the year rather than just one term.
- We now support International boarders across a number of year groups (Years Eight, Nine & Ten).
- We now aligned one ESL Specialist to work both days at Knox rather than two sharing this role and this teacher also teaches these boys at the SCE. This ESL teacher is now joining these boys in the Knox academic classes as a teacher's aide to support these boys and our teachers to assist with follow up with these boys outside these classes in the boarding house and with Ms Cooper.
- We now require all our International Immersion boys to experience boarding in Term four, so they are inducted into our boarding culture and routines.
- We now provide information sessions to our Academic Staff who work with these boys in their classes, which gives them a greater understanding and appreciation of this programmes to assist these boys in their classes with their English, and general induction to the Knox Way!
- We have arranged new Integration Camps for specific Stages and Years to build on developing mutual respect, integration and our boarding culture moving forward.

The diversity of Knox boarding is highly valuable, and valued. Indeed, we are very protective of it. Hence, the integration programme embraces both local and international students, so that a genuine social and learning community is created, where the different contexts and stories of our boarders drive a commonality, rather than create any barriers, ensuring that the boys achieve the growth and success they want.

## Where to From Here?

I am very proud of what we have collectively achieved so far with this new Knox International Boarders Immersion Program, which has achieved so much in only its first year of operation. We will continue to develop and improve on this program each year to improve the induction and transitional experiences for our International boarders. In unison with this program we have also focussed our attention to developing Integration and Cultural Boarding Programs to improve ALL our boarders' experiences while at Knox.

My hope is 'Our Story' helps provide you with a few ideas which might assist you with your International boarders and culture and within your Schools. Our successful program would not have been possible without the wonderful support, vision and wisdom provided to me by our Headmaster Mr. John Weeks.

# Strategic Planning

Taking the Time to Talk

## AUTHOR

Adrian Byrne  
Director of Boarding  
St Ignatius' College, Riverivew

One of the things we often lack is time to plan. There are a million and one reasons why we don't take time off during the term, the main reason is because we always have to look after the boarders in our care. Holidays come around and boarding staff go away for a well earned rest that they so need and deserve. Planning always falls down to the bottom of the list. Coming into this role I knew it was important to take stock, look to the future and improve on the structures that we already had in place. With the support of the Principal, Dr. Paul Hine, I took the opportunity to take all of my Heads of Division (Years 7 - 12) off campus for two days.

Strategically I decided to take my staff off site. It was important to go somewhere different otherwise we all would have found work to do, as life in boarding rarely slows down. We went away to Newport, only one hour from the school. Having two days to just sit down and evaluate what we do in regards to our policies and procedures was invaluable. We started the day by looking back: What is it that we do well? What makes us stand out? How we do that in our context of Ignatian Spirituality?

I had to ensure that these days were worthwhile, so, I spoke to Richard Stokes and he offered to fly down with Tom Dunsmore for the day. I never knew ABSA offered this service but it was great to have Richard and Tom around to give us a national context. They talked about the challenges in boarding, good practice, PD and positive psychology. One of the highlights was that they got us to focus on where we were going and after a group activity which challenged us we came up with a theme for the year which was 'growth'.

The next day we looked at a pastoral care program and we had our Senior Counsellor, Ben Moffatt, come in to take us through scenarios in dealing with students at risk. In the afternoon we took the time to consider how we could ensure consistency amongst our six boarding houses so the boys and parents have a seamless transition from Years 7 - 12.

It was great for the eight of us to get away for two days. We were lucky enough to have our new Year 11 Head of Division up from Melbourne to join us. Incidentally, Richard was also on the panel for our Heads of Division interviews a few months earlier, another great way that ABSA can support you. Having an external on the interview panel was invaluable.

I know it is hard to take that step and take off time during school time but I recommend that if you get the opportunity take some time out to plan that you do it. I have found that the start of the year has been a whole lot easier





## The World Has Changed!

**AUTHOR**  
Charlie Scudamore  
Vice Principal  
Geelong Grammar School



As a child I used to look forward to watching the BBC adaptation of Thomas Hughes' book *Tom Brown's School Days*. Poor Tom was mercilessly and continuously bullied by a malicious individual, Harry Flashman, and his cronies. Set in Rugby School, in 19th Century England, this BBC TV series imprinted in my young impressionable mind images of boarding school life. Although Flashman got his comeuppance, Tom survived and eventually thrived and the wonderful Dr Thomas Arnold - Headmaster and hero to all boys - impressed me with his kindness and compassion. After watching that series I was immensely grateful that I came home each evening to the comfort of my parents and seven siblings.

Fast forward to 1990. I have been appointed Head of Geography at Geelong Grammar School. I am Resident Tutor in Francis Brown House. A boarding house. I have agreed to work in a boarding school, my first ever foray into such an environment. Twenty-seven years later and I am still an employee of this remarkable institution, telling all that it has been an absolute privilege to have served in this School. Boarding is stronger than ever. Timbertop and Senior Boarding numbers have reached record levels, Middle School Boarding numbers are strong and we continue to espouse the benefits of sending children to a boarding community. Newsletter articles, *Light Blue* and *The Corian* all highlight the array of innovative and valuable initiatives, programmes, activities and learning - life lessons - that occur on a daily basis. There is so much good, so much generosity, so much to celebrate in all that we do. But there is a 'shadow side'.

That 'shadow side' comes in the form of poor decision making. The 'shadow side' connects to the concept of 'pack behaviour'. Individual students know the difference between right and wrong, but sometimes, at the right (or should I say wrong?) time and space, the collective nous of several adolescent pre-frontal cortexes - a part of the brain meant to assist with executive functioning - seems to shut down. What is thought to be 'fun' turns out to be the complete opposite. This

'shadow side' often ends up with somebody getting physically or psychologically hurt or harmed. In today's world, the pervasiveness of the shadow-side has become even more complicated due to the prevalence of social media. The many social media platforms students may frequent mean that the negative side of 'pack behaviour' can now occur, and frequently does, in a virtual world. We are all aware of the consequences of 'virtual' bullying. Its impact can be profound.

Fortunately, good behaviour far outweighs the bad. There is much kindness, compassion, thoughtfulness and camaraderie to be found in our community. However, when the 'shadow side' casts its gloom, its impact can be far mightier than all that remains in the light. In *Positive Education* the terms 'negativity bias' and 'positivity ratios' are taught to all. Human reaction to negative events causes the flight or fight response, leading to - amongst other things - increases in stress, anxiety, fear, cortisol and adrenalin levels. These are survival mechanisms that allowed our species to survive. Negative events release powerful emotions. The theory behind Positivity Ratios suggests that evolution has given us positive emotions to cope with the times when things in life inevitably go wrong. Importantly, we need to experience far more positive emotions in our daily lives than negative. Negative emotions last longer. They remain in our long-term memory. We are biased towards them. Therefore, negative events in any community, such as a boarding house or any school or institution, can have a long lasting impact on all.

Australia has heard evidence concerning the past mistreatment of children in several institutions through the Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse. As a result of the preliminary Commission findings, new legislation has been introduced to protect children. Schools across the land have introduced policies and procedures that aim at countering the physical, emotional and sexual harm of any child. Schools can no longer manage certain incidents within the confines of their own four walls. Instead, schools are now required by law to report certain offences to various agencies including the Child Protection Services, the Commission for Children and Young People, the Victorian Institute of Education and even directly to the police. The exposure of mistreatment of students through the Royal Commission, has resulted in Geelong Grammar School initiatives aimed at supporting those who survived the abuse, as well the formation



of a Recognition Committee and policies and procedures that are built upon existing school policies that are aimed at further protecting all children placed in our duty of care.

Schools' duty of care responsibilities have increased dramatically as a result of the preliminary recommendations made by the Royal Commission. Schools have had to implement more stringent policies including the *Child Safety Policy* and *Child Safety Code of Conduct*. Times have changed. It has never been right to bully, harass or abuse; yet, somehow such displays of unwanted aggression have been excused or justified by the perpetrators or even the system. No longer. The world has changed. This message needs to get across to our student body now more than ever.

Unlike boarding in *Tom Brown's Schooldays* where students had no communication with home during the term and schools rarely allowed parents in, we are dependent on the relationships we establish with our parent body. We often state that we cannot educate your child effectively without your support. I believe that through kindness and compassion (the latter of which is defined as empathy actions through care) - the two tenets our pastoral care structures are based on - we can seek to significantly reduce our community of

the 'shadow side'. I believe that through educational and relational management we can strive to make Geelong Grammar School an even safer and friendlier environment for every student, on every day of the year. The world has changed. It is changing for the better and we need to prepare our children well for it.



## Dopamine

How Does this "Digital Heroin" Impact our Tech Lives?

### AUTHOR

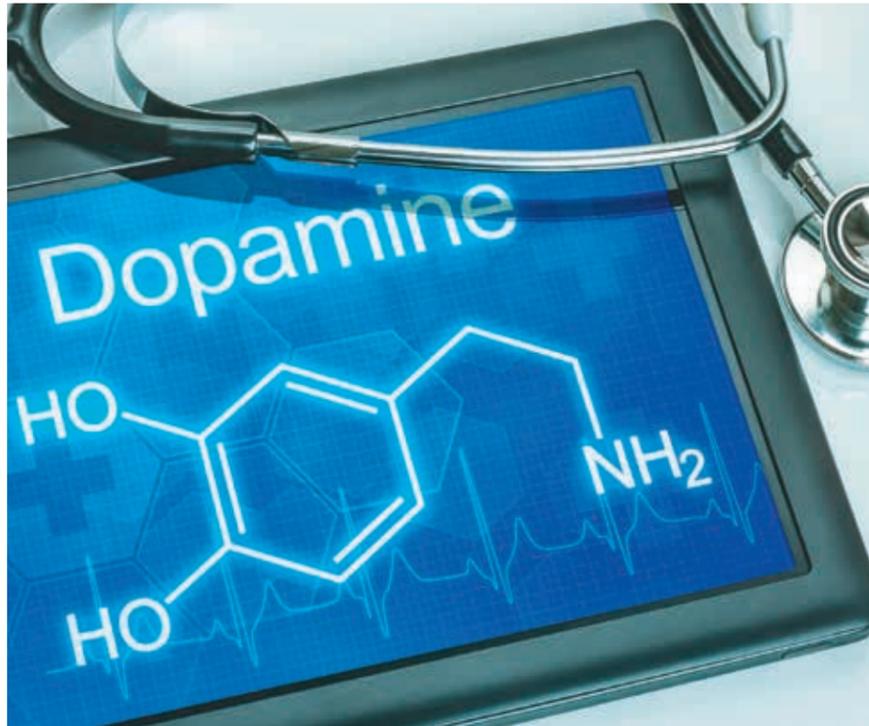
Simon Noakes  
Interactive Schools

Much has been argued on the subject of social media, particularly in relation to Millennials, in recent years:

- is it good or bad?
- is it actually harming young minds?
- is it creating a generation far more removed on a social/relationship basis?

Understanding these impacts is essential if we are to best prepare our younger generations.

We can regard social media as a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it enables a platform for users to share amazing stories and to interact with communities on a global scale. But on the other hand, concerns around self-esteem and the growing fear of Social Networking Addiction underlie fears of social media use. The reality is that whatever the impact of social media, it is here to stay.



### Dopamine and Social Media

The use of mobile tech and social media has been proven to release dopamine - the "feel good" chemical - in our brains. We receive a text, we get a hit of dopamine. We get a Like on Facebook, we get a hit of dopamine. Someone has commented on our Instagram post, we get a hit of dopamine. Simon Sinek - author, motivational speaker and marketing consultant - identifies social media as having heavily addictive consequences; particularly on the Millennial generation.

### Tech = Instant Gratification

Simon identifies that we live in a world of instant gratification, easily facilitated by social media and mobile technology. The way that we now interact, shop and entertain ourselves is led by the notion of instant gratification. You want to buy something, you go to Amazon. You want to watch a show, you binge entire seasons on Netflix and streaming services. You want to seek companionship, you swipe right on Tinder and similar dating apps. The impact of this is a generation growing up without the values of patience instilled in them. This means that important factors of adult-life, like professional work and love, become more difficult to manage. Realistically, there are no quick fixes for such things - they require time and hard work to achieve.

### What can we do?

While there is no simple answer, tech today is having an impact that we are still learning to understand, there are steps we can take:

- remove the temptation: one of the major changes we see with mobile tech is where we charge our devices. For most, this will be overnight by the bed. Try to change this, charge mobiles in another room for example. This will help remove the temptation of looking at your phone first thing in the morning or even going on your phone when you are struggling to sleep
- take a #DigitalDetox: we all need down time from the hustle and bustle of our working (or learning) days. When this comes around look to do activities that are not based on the phone or in front of a screen. Go outside and enjoy nature. Connect with friends and family face to-face (FaceTime does not count)
- turn off notifications (even for a little bit): we all know that sound, and we all know that without thinking you will be checking your phone instantly. Take away this reaction by turning off notifications. You may miss the odd Instagram like or not be aware that Lady Gaga is doing a LIVE-stream, but that's ok!

Social media is not going anywhere and there is a real danger that it can become an addiction for many young users. We need to understand that social media can have real effects on people and prepare ourselves for safe social media use.

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## Culture... a Quintessential Concept in Boarding

**AUTHOR**  
Casey Brealy  
Acting Head of Boarding  
Château de Sauveterre  
France



Culture is a word that is used a lot in boarding communities. Whether it is referring to the culture of boarding as a whole, the individual culture of a school or the multicultural nature of a boarding house, it is certainly at the forefront of the boarding ethos. In my years working in boarding, I have always valued the rich cultural experiences offered to boarders in a wide array of institutions; however, it was not until my recent move to France (to work in an English boarding school based in the Midi-Pyrenees region) that I truly understood the magnitude of this wonderful word... culture. So, in essence, this article contains my reflective ramblings on this concept. However, before getting to the summations of my thoughts, I thought I would give you some insight into the boarding cultures that have shaped my opinions.

### The Australian Boarding Culture

Despite being a day boy, my first interactions with a boarding culture was while I was a student at the esteemed Marist College, Ashgrove. As an only child and day boy, I must admit that I was painstakingly jealous of the camaraderie that the boarders seemed to share. Years later, working as a teacher and housemaster in Toowoomba, I was finally immersed in the boarding culture. I must say that I was rightfully jealous as a young boy - I now know what I was missing out on. This new cultural experience opened many doors for me and enabled me to meet people, visit places and form professional networks that I never thought possible. Whilst each school's culture is individual, throughout my work with different institutions I have been able to identify somewhat of an "Australian boarding identity", which like Australia itself is quite multicultural. Within the Australian boarding identity, there are some major influences. Firstly, it goes without saying that rural Australia plays a large role in shaping the Australian boarding identity. Akubras, workshirts, boots, jeans and big belt buckles are often seen leaving the gates of a boarding school, especially in Toowoomba. In addition to this many schools are fortunate to be able to draw upon Australian Indigenous, Torres Strait Islander and Pacific Island cultures in their boarding community. Finally, Australia benefits from a significant amount of international students, who add to the multicultural identity of a boarding house. Each school has a different mixture of students, often varying from cohort to cohort; however, I believe that these cultural influences play a large role in shaping our national boarding identity, or culture.



### The English Boarding Culture

England has a rich history of boarding, with some of the most recognised institutions in the world. This robust and distinguished culture of boarding is shaped by many generations of excellence in education. Within this culture is a sub-culture, of preparatory schools, which see students immersed in boarding from as young as seven years old. Often, to people who have not experienced the culture of boarding, this seems a little absurd; however, with centuries of success it is hard to argue against the benefits of this schooling system. Also, having witnessed the benefits of preparatory boarding in Australia and England, I can personally attest to its benefits. Due to the excellence and rich history, it is not surprising that English boarding schools draw applications from students around the globe, once again, creating a multicultural hub for students to be immersed in. In my new role, I have been fortunate enough to be welcomed into this esteemed culture, gaining much insight and knowledge from the experience.



### The French Boarding Culture

In comparison to England and Australia, boarding in France is relatively uncommon. This is possibly due to a number of factors, including the density of population and the highly centralised educational system. Regardless of this, I have been fortunate enough to find an amazing boarding experience in a beautiful regional area. Like most boarding schools in France, Chateau de Sauveterre caters to international students. The school is operated by the Cothill Educational Trust, a prestigious and well-regarded institution in England. Sauveterre opens its doors to students from around the globe, offering a rich cultural experience that is hard to summarise. Is it French? English? International? In essence, it is a little of each. First and foremost, the school is French. The school is housed in an actual French chateau, the students speak French in all lessons (regardless of their ability) and the objective is full immersion. However, the school also holds dear the traditional English boarding model. It upholds all of the values and ideals that you would expect to find in a English prep school. Finally, Sauveterre sees all of the benefits that are apparent in an international school. It captures students from a wide array of schools and cultural backgrounds, many of whom have never boarded before. This term we had students from Zambia, Hong Kong, Ireland, Wales, Singapore, Nigeria, Spain, Switzerland, USA, Turkey, Germany, China and of course, England.



It was through this rich cultural experience that I began to reflect on the idea of culture in boarding. The mixed cultural identity of Sauveterre forced me to think about other institutions, and about boarding culture as a whole. It was through this reflective process that I began to uncover the vastness of the topic. In fact, I found it very difficult to collate my ideas in order to write this article; there were certainly a number of thoughts that were left on the editing floor, for pondering at another time. However, the concepts of school culture, an individual's influence on culture and staff culture seemed to keep reappearing, meaning that they must be of importance to me.



## Purpose-Built Year Seven Boarding House

### School culture

As I have previously mentioned, boarding culture is heavily reliant on the individual school. Each school has shaped its own individual culture and identity, which caters to the students in their care. This culture is often promoted in marketing material, it is seen in daily routines and it is evidenced in the way that people discuss the institution. As education is not a one size fits all model, some boarding cultures will work better for some students. Due to this, there is no wrong or right when it comes to school culture. What is important, though, is that a school knows what their culture is. Furthermore, it is essential that they stay true to this culture in everything that they do. Consistency is vital for all involved, staff, students and families alike. Continual reminders of this culture ensures that a school can flourish and that all individuals in the community can support the collective ideals of the institution. Fortunately for me, my career has taken me to institutions with a strong understanding of their individual ethos. More importantly, I have been fortunate enough to find schools with a culture, values and ideals that are very similar to my own, which is of the utmost importance.

### An individual's impact

Throughout my experience I have seen the tremendous impact that an individual can have on an entire boarding culture. My first mentor, Ian Basset from Toowoomba Anglican College and Preparatory School, is the epitome of this idea. He is a man that percolates wisdom and experience onto those around him, students and staff alike. Due to his many years at the school, it is simple to see Ian's fingerprints on every element of the boarding program. In my career, I have also seen boarding staff come and go, and with these staffing changes the culture of a boarding house completely shift. Whilst boarding is often a community effort, it is certainly noticeable when an individual changes the shape or culture of an organisation. Considering this, it puts immense pressure on the leadership team of any boarding school. Hiring someone for a position in boarding is an unusual and difficult process, as you are not just hiring for a job... you are hiring for a lifestyle. Additionally, you are often not hiring an individual, instead you are hiring a family. Therefore finding the right "fit" or "match" for the culture of the school is essential. This is difficult in any circumstance, let alone when it is done via Skype across the globe as was the case with my recent appointment. Regardless of the hiring process, the cultural fit of the candidate (including their family) and the school is a key consideration.

### Staff culture

The acknowledgement of the importance staff wellbeing and positive staff culture has become increasingly prominent in both research and professional practice. Not only does current research suggest that wellbeing is important in a school environment, but it also ascertains that in order to improve student wellbeing, you must first address the wellbeing of staff. I would argue that this is even more important when it comes to boarding. The requirements put on boarding staff go above and beyond most professions. It is truly a 24/7 job, which places pressure on employees both professionally and personally. A positive culture, which supports the wellbeing of all community members, inclusive of staff, students and families, is essential. In boarding, colleagues often become more than the traditional "workmate". In fact, I have found that they become pseudo family members and key pillars for support. Fortunately for me, throughout my career these people have been there to revitalise me when tired, reinvigorate me when overwhelmed and celebrate with me at the end of a long term. This positive staff culture has significantly improved my well-being and allowed me to perform my role as best as possible. Therefore, once again a cultural "fit" or "match" becomes essential.

In addition, boarding schools have the unique ability to create meaningful, extended networks for people around the globe. The opportunity for young people to work as "Gappies", or more formally resident staff members, allows boarding school culture to extend further than graduation. It provides a pathway for young people to explore the world, take a step toward independence and give back to the boarding culture that they gained so much from. Additionally, worldwide networks, including ABSA or the BSA, allow for staff in all stages of their career to explore boarding opportunities around the globe. These opportunities highlight the idea of a worldwide boarding community, allowing it to be seen as a collective entity, without segregation into individual schools, continents or countries.

### Final thoughts

All in all, regardless of the segment of culture that is being discussed, boarding culture is contagious. It rubs off of those who are exposed to it, and with it so do the many benefits of a boarding education. Throughout my reflection, I have realised the immense amount of cultural benefits that boarders are exposed to. Firstly, the multicultural nature of a boarding house allows students to be exposed to different ways of thinking, doing and being during the most formative years of their lives. This exposure helps to build a wider understanding of the world around them and opens their eyes to life outside of the schoolyard. In addition, students are able to embrace a school's culture, clutching key morals and values and applying them to their own lives. Moreover, the culture of camaraderie that is built between the boarders throughout their time at school is unrivalled; it is certainly a bond that cannot be broken. Boarding education also allows young people and professionals to become a part of a worldwide network, providing pathways for post-school exploration. It provides a culture of stability, mentorship and community. Therefore, cultural experience is a byproduct of any boarding experience. It is truly contagious to all of those who are fortunate enough to be involved, staff included. Although I started as a begrudging and envious day student, I have been fortunate enough to benefit from the cultural hive that is boarding in a professional sense. This is something I am truly grateful for.

### AUTHOR

Claire Kelly  
Publications Coordinator  
Aquinas College, WA

Construction of a new purpose-built Year Seven boarding house is complete at Aquinas College and the boarding students are enjoying their new home this term.

Year Seven boarders from across WA, from Bremer Bay to Broome, live at the College during term time while studying at the College (alongside Years 8-12 boarders).

The boys' new house, named Brothers House, includes all the comforts of home – including spacious bedrooms, plentiful living areas, a large kitchen/dining area and an outdoor area for the boys to enjoy.

Bremer Bay student Ben Ross said he liked his new home, enjoying living with his classmates.

"It's good. We are making more friends in our year by all being together. We get to know each other better because we are all living here instead of in three different houses," Ben said.



Aquinas College Year Seven boarder Ben Ross is enjoying his new home away from home.

Aquinas College Deputy Head - Boarding Michael Dempsey said the new house helped the College's youngest boarding students adjust more readily to being away from home.

"Coming to boarding school initially is a huge adjustment for a student. The new Brothers House offers Year Seven students an opportunity to form friendships with fellow boarders in their year group by grouping them all into one house," Mr Dempsey said.

He said the College's Aquinas Connect program, aimed at Year Six students entering boarding the following year, was designed to create social connections for the boys before they started their boarding experience.

"Aquinas Connect is an initiative which sees the Year Seven boarding cohort of the following year engaging with one another at events at the College and via the internet, building friendships and connections ahead of their official start at boarding school."

"The program also runs for the first six months of the boys' boarding experience in Year Seven to ensure the students are adjusting to living away from home and understand and use the support networks available to them."

He said the Aquinas Connect program and purpose-built Year Seven boarding house were vital to maintaining positive transitions to boarding for Year Seven students.

"The Year Seven boys have settled into their new house well this term, getting to know the space and enjoying the sense of home the new place has for them."

The existing three boarding houses at Aquinas College are also undergoing renovations. Gibney House has been completed and reopened this term. All renovations will be completed by mid 2018.



## Mastering the Art of Managing a Student's Transition to University and College

**AUTHOR**  
Liam Brizee  
Business Development Manager  
Student One

Student One's "Class of 2018" is now busily transitioning from high-school into higher education.

With hundreds of university and vocational students from Australia and the world now in-house, living out their dreams at both our Adelaide Street and Wharf Street residences, Student One is doing its part to assist residents in establishing the necessary routines for post-school success.

Students are increasingly demanding higher standards of living in their accommodation, and many are choosing to shy away from on-campus accommodation. Instead, they are moving towards the safety, security, and all-inclusive approach of purpose-built student accommodation.

From speaking with hundreds of students and parents since Student One launched its first residence in Brisbane in 2016, expectations have changed and priorities have shifted. Accommodation has now become a key component in academic success and personal development.

For students accustomed to the boarding school environment, where relationships, life and study are so closely interconnected, Student One acts as a structured pathway to full independence. Residents are provided with the guidance they seek across a range of life-management skills, all within a safe environment that is conducive to learning, and due to Student One's CBD location, also conducive to earning.

We can say that we have staff on site 24/7 - which we of course do - but what we really mean is that our residents will always have someone there to help them - no matter what time it is.

We can talk about how friendly and helpful our Resident Assistants are, but most importantly they are there to set the right example for their fellow residents. After all, we all know the positive effect that group leaders can have on their peers.

When we take students and parents for tours of our residences, we're guaranteed to wax lyrical about our unlimited WiFi, our free gyms, our pool, and our dedicated study floor. While these facilities are impressive, the true goal was to create an environment in which students can grow and maintain healthy minds and healthy bodies.

Our location in Brisbane's CBD - which provides our residents with the best public and active transport options to universities and colleges - has also allowed our residents to achieve the study-work-life balance that is required for today's modern student.

Our community of Australian students has grown even larger this year, and we are proud that the number of students receiving our Student One Scholarship has grown by more than 500% in the past year. This scholarship provides discounts to Australian students receiving government assistance, and is specifically designed for regional students who are making the big move to Brisbane for their studies.

The growth in our scholarship has closely mirrored the growth of our Australian cohort in general. In our case, we find that once a student walks through our doors they will almost always end up calling Student One home.

With an holistic approach to student living, our Class of 2018 has already begun to flourish. Young men and women who checked themselves in experiencing anxiety and uncertainty, are now becoming confident adults who can cook, clean, and navigate the real world with greater ease. Those who were worried about part-time work are now working around the

corner from their new home, gaining crucial skills to aid their personal and professional development.

They are developing new friendships and networks with fellow student residents from all corners of the globe and are successfully finding part-time work at a range of city-based retail, entertainment or dining establishments, gaining crucial skills to aid their personal and professional development.

There will no doubt be challenges for our Australian cohort in 2018 too. Just like in the boarding environment they have moved from, our student residents will get homesick. Through our Residential Life program, our Resident Assistants have had their hands full helping those who've had to adjust to a brand-new life in a matter of days.

Over the course of the year, residents will also learn valuable lessons in time management and motivation - often times the hard way. But just as we saw in 2017, those residents will emerge on the other side of these challenges as better, more resilient people.

For the team at Student One, this is what we focus on. Better facilities. Better services. Better safety. A better, more culturally-diverse community, and - most importantly - encouraging our residents in becoming better people.

As a proud partner of ABSA, Student One is fully committed to supporting the interests and values of Australian boarding schools and families, who have invested the time, effort and guidance that has allowed students to realise their full life potential.





## New Technology Redefines Classroom Teaching Opportunities

**AUTHOR**  
Rachel Demarco  
PR/Marketing Manager  
InsideOutPR

Schools nationwide have always battled with children writing on desks and walls. Now, one Central Coast School is actually encouraging this activity as a means to bring back the act of writing and creative thought. Educational institutions around the country are set to follow in the footsteps of Darkinjung Barker College in Yarralong and embrace a new technology that supports the 'written word' and maximises teacher to student learning and classroom collaboration.

With more than one in two people classified as visual learners, the innovative Dry Erase Surface (DES) from Post-it® fosters a more nurtured educational environment. Designed to be utilised throughout all age brackets, for high school and tertiary institutions the tool allows for greater collaboration between students as well as teaching through building upon concepts to maximise understanding, mind mapping, brainstorming and to-do lists. Students can equally make use of the surface for group work, ideas and prioritising deadlines.

Educational expert and current school teacher, Prue Reid says, "What we are recognising is that neural circuits are directly related to performing handwriting

which is creating interest in the education world to keep it present in the curriculum and classrooms.

Steiner schools include form drawing in their curriculum for this exact reason and it is very powerful. You can almost feel your neural pathways connecting up in your brain as you try and reproduce more complicated forms. These pathways enhance creativity which we know is so important in the digital era."

Recently released NAPLAN results (December 2017) show a decline in the writing scores of Year Seven students at a national level. It also showed the lowest scores across the four fields assessed - reading, writing, language conventions and numeracy - in Year Nine. These findings about the quality of writing in high schools are concerning. They stress the importance of understanding what may be hindering students' writing development and performance.

In this technologically advanced age, most two-year-olds are able to navigate an iPhone but unable to write their name. With the digital takeover it is more important than ever for parents and



schools to bring back basics and focus on encouraging handwriting. For day care and early schooling the innovation will promote a stronger written skill that is evaporating as digital devices encroach on these traditional practices. It encourages peer interaction, creativity and confidence in children as well as a daily communication tool between educators and parents.

This Indigenous NSW Central Coast Primary School, Darkinjung Barker College, is the first in the country to adopt the new learning innovation - and trialling on students in years K-6. Jamie Shackleton, Head Teacher at Darkinjung Barker College says, "As teachers we have found it much easier to be able to work out maths problems with children who require help, but the kids also think it's great to be able to do spelling tasks, working out and problem solving on.

The rest of the staff love it too, we've been able to utilise it to make a term planner and reignite the excitement of group work by allowing each individual to scribble down their notes together. It truly is a great resource for staff."

Post-it® Dry Erase Surface is a 'whiteboard adhesive' that can be cut to any shape and fixed to any surface. You can transform tables, windows, fridges, doors, walls and floors through to books and other portable more 'out of the box' items into whiteboards. This creation provides complete versatility in enabling individuals to capture thoughts in the moment and think anywhere.

With easy installation (unroll, peel and stick), DES does not require any assembly, tradesmen or additional tools to fix. As an adhesive, it's less intrusive and a convenient space-saver appealing to

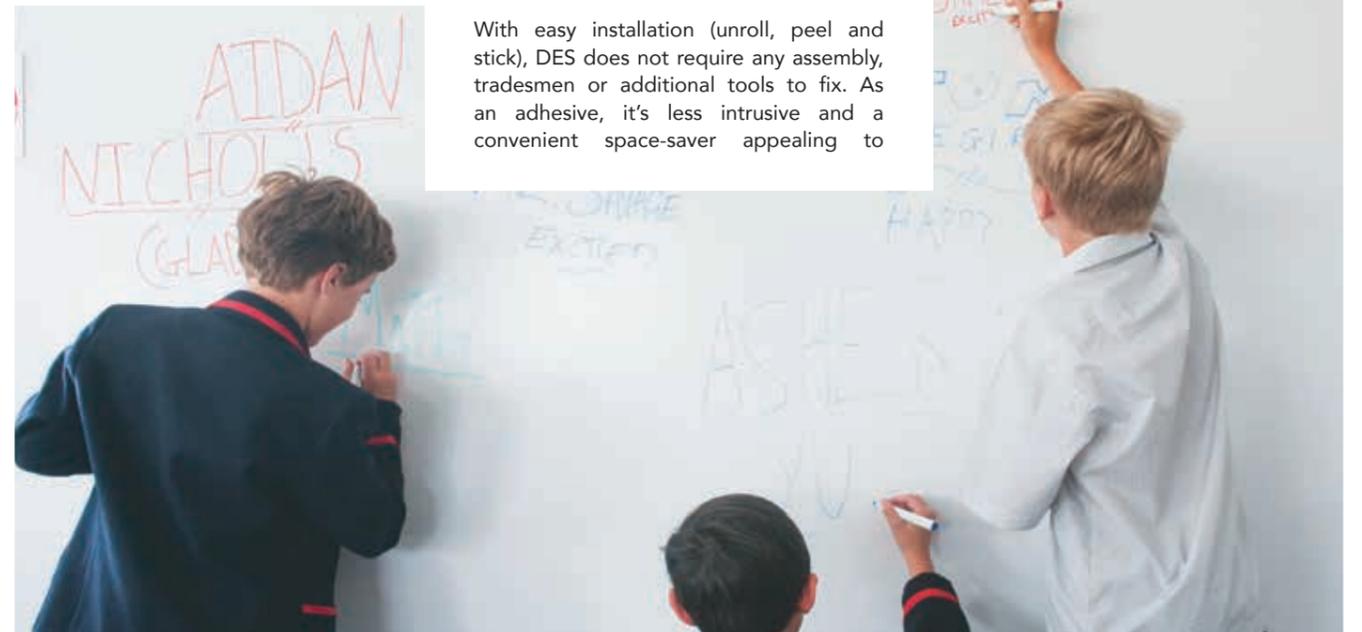
those with smaller sized areas or modern institutions upgrading fitouts and facilities. The flexibility of DES allows day cares, schools, TAFEs and universities to form their own desired shape, providing complete creative application that can be cut to outline names, letters, logos and other shapes.

*"Applications of Post-it® Dry Erase Surface are limitless and lend itself to the imagination of users. Where new technology typically encompasses change management for adoption, its simplicity means it's an innovation every teacher and student can embrace," says Rhonda McAllister, 3M ANZ General Manager - Consumer Business Group.*

Recent research shows 85% of Gen Z students learn best utilising both digital and non-digital tools, while 93% get better grades when they write their notes down. Post-it® DES has the ability to completely evolve conventional teaching methodology, providing a more inspiring, dynamic and personal learning environment for both students and teachers.



Image courtesy of 3M



Images courtesy of Darkinjung Barker College



## Boarding School Fee Inflation Shows No Sign of Slowing

**AUTHOR**  
Jack Stevens  
Co-founder & CEO of Edstart



Edstart's annual review of tuition and boarding fees across Australia's non-government school sector has revealed that boarding fee increases continue to outpace wage growth as schools struggle to cope with increased operating costs.

Our latest research looks at 70 top boarding schools around the country to capture the trends in tuition and boarding fees over the past year.

Across the 70 schools, boarding fees have risen by an average of 3.3 per cent from 2017 to 2018. While some schools have lifted fees significantly, most schools have increased boarding fees by between 2 and 2.9 per cent.

Boarding fees have generally increased at a faster pace this year compared to the tuition fees, which only increased by an average of 2.5 percent across the same set of schools. In fact, almost 40 per cent of boarding schools increased their boarding fees at a higher rate than their tuition fees.

Three schools moved against the inflation trend, reducing or holding boarding fees flat between 2017 and 2018. The Scots School Albury and Scotch College Perth both kept boarding fees the same over the past year. Loreto College in Adelaide took this a step further, slashing boarding fees by 19 per cent in 2018, moving from \$25,035 in 2017 to \$21,000 this year.

At the other end of the spectrum, seven schools increased their boarding fees by 5 per cent or more in the past year. New England Girls School was among the highest with a 10.5 per cent hike.

While schools in New South Wales and South Australia remained close to the 3.3 per cent average, the remaining states showed different trends. ACT and Victoria showed the largest average inflation at 5.4 per cent and 4.7 per cent respectively whereas Western Australia recorded the lowest average increase of 2.1 per cent.

Even though many schools have managed to minimise the rise in their school fees, the escalating costs to upkeep and develop schools mean fees are still increasing at a rate far greater than wage growth. In fact, growth in wages for the average Australian family employed in the private sector was just 1.9 per cent for the 12 months ending December 2017.

The same inflation trend has persisted for many years now, placing significant pressure on parents with school fees eating up an increasing share of the family budget.

This is precisely why Edstart was founded; to help families ease the burden of continually rising school fee costs. When a family elects to use Edstart, we pay their school fees as they fall due, eliminating the constant worry about making large school fee payments. Parents are then able to spread their school fees out by making monthly payments that can extend over a period that suits them best, up to 5 years after their youngest child graduates.

The main benefit of using Edstart is being able to pay for school fees over a longer, more manageable period that will suit each family's specific financial capacity. Extending this time frame shields families from the yearly increases in fees while replacing the large cash outflows for school invoices with smaller, more levelled outflows. We work closely with each family to ensure that they are making monthly payments at a level that is appropriate to their specific circumstances.

We empower families to pay for the education of their choice without having to drain the savings account or rely on other expensive forms of debt. Parents can learn more about Edstart and apply at any time of the year by simply filling out our online application on our website at [www.edstart.com.au](http://www.edstart.com.au)

## New Principals

### John Paul College Brisbane

Karen Spiller OAM is the new Principal at John Paul College, Daisy Hill in Brisbane. After 18 years leading St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School, also in Brisbane, Karen has assumed the Principal's role at one of Queensland's largest co-educational Colleges. While relatively new to Boarding, Karen is already relishing the opportunity to know the boarders and their understand their daily routines and lifestyle.

Karen's background is as an experienced educator and leader having taught and led at St. Margaret's Anglican Girls' School and Hillbrook Anglican School as well as her time at St Aidan's.

In 2017 she was recognised for her contribution to Education and Women through the Order of Australia Medal and in 2011 was awarded a Churchill Fellowship.

"I am thoroughly enjoying the opportunity to lead John Paul College and to learn more about our boarders. They come from all over Australia and internationally, as well, and I look forward to getting to know them personally and to know their families. I commence some regional visits and shows in May and am looking forward to meeting parents wherever possible".



Mrs Karen Spiller  
Principal  
John Paul College,  
Brisbane, QLD

### Santa Maria College Perth

The Santa Maria College community is delighted at the appointment of Jennifer Oaten to the position of Principal. Jennifer brings with her 20 years of experience in Catholic education, where faith, community and values are central to everything we do.

Jennifer and her husband Simon have two children, Oliver who is 15 years old and Amy who is 12, and a student at Santa Maria. Jennifer believes her family has helped shape her values and their support has been crucial to her career.

Jennifer grew up on a farm in Margaret River and her first experience of Santa Maria College was when she arrived as a Boarder in Year Eight. Jennifer finished her schooling at Santa Maria College and headed to Edith Cowan University to study Education.

Following graduation from university her first teaching role was at Presbyterian Ladies' College as a Science teacher. She went on to become a Head of Year before moving to St Norbert College as Head of Science and then Acting Deputy Principal.

Jennifer was then presented with the opportunity to work for the Catholic Education Office as a Science consultant. She then moved to Notre Dame University where she lectured students on a pathway to teaching.

Curriculum has always been Jennifer's passion, so when the role of Deputy Principal Teaching and Learning at Santa Maria College was advertised, she was excited and jumped at the opportunity. Jennifer spent seven years in this role before her appointment as Principal.



Mrs Jennifer Oaten  
Principal  
Santa Maria College,  
Perth, WA

### St Joseph's College Hunters Hill

Dr Christopher Hayes was appointed Headmaster of St Joseph's College Hunters Hill and commenced at the start of the 2018 academic year.

Chris is a renowned, highly successful, and experienced Catholic educational leader in Australia. Chris has also been Principal of Xavier College in Melbourne and Headmaster at St Edmund's College,

Canberra. At St Ignatius College Riverview, Chris held the positions of Director of Senior Schooling, and Director of Boarding. Chris' distinguished leadership has consistently been characterised by prayer, generosity, and a determined commitment to creative learning and improved academic outcomes for all students.

Chris' passion for providing a rich and nurturing Catholic education is evident in his Doctoral studies with the Australian Catholic University, which explored how Christian values can be authentically incorporated in pedagogy and the daily interactions between teachers and students in the classroom. Chris also has a Masters of Education in Religious Education from the Australian Catholic University, and a Bachelor of Arts and Diploma of Education from the University of Sydney.

Chris is joined on campus by his wife Margaret and family.



Mr Christopher Hayes  
Headmaster  
St Joseph's College,  
Hunters Hill, NSW



## New Principals

### Snowy Mountains Grammar School Jindabyne

Andrew Bell re-joins the SMGS leadership team this year as Principal.

With over twenty years of leadership experience in several independent schools in curricular, pastoral and administrative roles, Andrew is committed to providing exceptional learning opportunities to enable all children, with a range of abilities and interests, to fulfil their own personal potential at Snowy Mountains Grammar School. Andrew is

passionate about our school meeting the needs of all students so they are well prepared to thrive in a modern world and are positive contributors to society. As a life-long learner himself, Andrew is currently completing a Doctorate of Education, researching the attributes and practices of expertise in the teaching profession.

SMGS is thrilled to have Mr Bell back at the helm of our vibrant school community. Andrew is joined by his wife and SMGS teacher, Melissa Bell, and their three children.



Mr Andrew Bell  
Principal  
Snowy Mountains  
Grammar School,  
Jindabyne, NSW

### The Glennie School Toowoomba

Mrs Kim Cohen is the twelfth Principal to head The Glennie School since its establishment in 1908, taking up the role in January 2017.

A well-known and respected educator with a demonstrated commitment to academic excellence and student wellbeing, Kim holds a Bachelor of Science and a Higher Diploma in Education as well as a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership. Kim's professional background includes executive roles in well-respected girls' schools in Australia, including St Margaret's AGS, Lourdes Hill College and Brisbane Girls Grammar School. Kim is a mathematics teacher and has held positions including Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal, Head of House, and Head of Year.

Mrs Cohen's educational vision is to provide girls with a caring, encouraging and challenging environment where they can pursue their personal best with passion.

"I am passionate about girls education and will strive to create an environment where girls will develop the skills to not only be deep, critical thinkers with the ability to approach problems systematically, but at the same time to be kind and compassionate young women," Mrs Cohen said.

"I feel privileged to be leading The Glennie School into the next stage of its development and am dedicated to maintaining and building upon the wonderful reputation it has earned over the decades. I was drawn to the school by its motto All She Can Be®" she said.



Mrs Kim Cohen  
Principal  
The Glennie School,  
Toowoomba, QLD

## New Heads of Boarding

### Anglican Church Grammar School Brisbane

Anglican Church Grammar School welcomes Jason Wynne-Markham to the position of Director of Boarding (Acting). Churchie's inner-city location provides a wonderful educational experience for the 170 boarding students for whom Churchie is their home away from home during term time.

Churchie couples its emotional intelligence programme with a boarding programme that centres students at its heart and delivers personalised learning across Churchie's four tenets of scholastic attainment, personal development, spiritual awareness and community service.

Jason has a long history of working with young men in a boarding school setting. He has spent the last nine years at Churchie as Assistant Boarding Master and Housemaster of Gerald House. Prior to that, Jason spent five years at St Augustine's College in Cairns.

"The boarding experience clearly defines our young men and gives them the opportunity to undertake decision-making processes that prepare them for life beyond school. In consultation with parents and staff, students soon learn the art of effective communication and the skills that we associate with well-organised people. Our young men are well placed to join the real world when they graduate from Churchie."

Jason developed an interest in personalised learning in 2008 when he was Head of Year Nine at Churchie. In 2010 he delivered a paper on improving academic outcomes for boys in a residential setting at the National Boys Conference at the Kings School in Sydney. This year, Jason will present at The Future of Education conference in Italy on the topic of how new technologies can improve care for residential students.



Mr Jason Wynne-Markham  
Director of Boarding (Acting)  
Anglican Church  
Grammar School,  
Brisbane, QLD

### Great Southern Grammar Albany

Brendan Goggins joined Great Southern Grammar in 2018 following six years working in Perth's PSA system as a Boarding House Director. Having grown up in the Swan Valley, Brendan developed an appreciation of country life and primary production. This, combined with 18 years experience in educational institutions around Australia, made for an easy transition to regional life in Albany and the Great Southern region.

Brendan has an extensive pastoral care background, with leadership roles in government and non-government schools. A philosophy of building rapport by becoming involved in activities that students are interested in, has seen him coach and manage a variety of sports and establish student-led groups, such as environment clubs.

Not one to lose sight of the importance of education and personal reflection, Brendan is currently studying his Masters of Education and brings the latest educational research to teaching, boarding and academic programmes. Brendan has also been a curriculum leader in remote communities in the Torres Strait and with this diversity in education, hopes to continue to develop the strong boarding culture at Great Southern Grammar. "It's great being back in the wide open spaces of this region. With the long sandy beaches and local produce, it's a tree change meeting the sea change".



Mr Brendan Goggins  
Director of Boarding  
Great Southern Grammar,  
Albany, WA

### The McDonald College Sydney

Kerry joined The McDonald College in 2017 as Head of Boarding, looking after a cherished group of 36 girls ranging in ages from 11 to 18 years.

Before coming to The McDonald College Kerry spent five years as Head of Year at The Rockhampton Grammar School in Queensland, Rockhampton.

Many new activities and programs have been offered at The McDonald College to the boarding students since Kerry's arrival. The Boarding House has even had the opportunity to host a guide dog puppy named Inky who Kerry has been training and raising since arriving in Sydney.

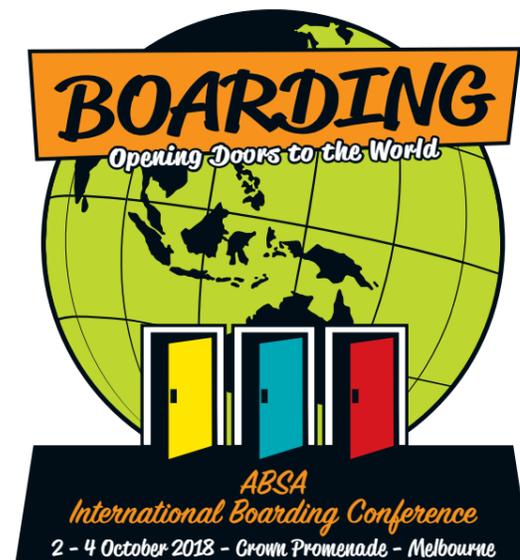
"Each student comes to boarding with a unique personality and spirit. Being part of a boarding family teaches the importance of serving each other and the community."

Kerry's boarding philosophy involves getting to know each student in her care and nurturing the girls based on their individual needs. She wants to assist the girls grow into independent resilient young woman with a great sense of community and self confidence in their own abilities.

Kerry has brought many skills and life experience to her role as Head of Boarding enhancing College life for the students in her care.



Ms Kerry Thompson  
Head of Boarding  
The McDonald College  
Sydney, NSW





## New Heads of Boarding

### Cape York Girl Academy Cape York

Kathy Hamilton has well over a decade of experience working with adolescents in a Head of Boarding role. Kathy recently has taken on a new challenge as Head of Boarding at Cape York Girl Academy.

The Girl Academy is a new school that commenced in January 2016. It is the first school of its kind in Australia, providing an opportunity for young Indigenous mothers, with their babies to finish high school in a boarding school environment. Other Indigenous girls who have been disengaged from formal schooling also attend. Girl Academy students graduate with an education and the confidence to be the best they can be as individuals, as valued members of their community and as future leaders.

The Girl Academy is based at Wangetti, approximately 40km north of Cairns. It is located in a peaceful bush setting.

The idea for the Academy came about through conversations between the Cape York Partnership with Cape York women who wanted something more for their disenfranchised daughters. The direction of the Academy is guided by Aboriginal women, including our students. This way the cultural, spiritual, educational and physical needs of our young women are met.

Kathy's present challenge lies in implementing best practice in small steps. She is passionate about providing a high quality home environment with ultimate care to students away from home. It is important to sustain an environment in which boarding students are actively engaged in their learning and where mutual self-respect is paramount. Where a wider Australian society and a sense of global citizenship is understood, and where their endeavours and unique gifts and differences are celebrated.



Ms Kathy Hamilton  
Head of Boarding  
Cape York Girl Academy,  
Cape York, QLD

### Saint Ignatius' College Sydney

Adrian Byrne was appointed to the role of Director of Boarding at Saint Ignatius' College, Riverview permanently at the start of 2018. Over the last 16 years Adrian has worked in boarding schools in NSW and QLD.

Adrian began his teaching career in Griffith NSW, where he realised the importance of parents to having choices for their child's education and role boarding schools could play in that decision-making process.

He then moved to Barker College and as well as teaching took on roles including Head of House, Assistant Head of Department Economics and Dean of the Senior School. He then moved to Anglican Church Grammar School in Brisbane as the Head of Gerald Boarding House. In 2011 he moved to Riverview.

Adrian has worked at the College for eight years and worked as the Year Nine Division Master for six years before sharing the Director of Boarding Role in 2017. He realises that first and foremost he is an educator and the importance of being an excellent class room teacher is paramount.

Adrian is looking to grow the boarding community which currently sits at 321 full-time boarders, implement a boarding specific pastoral care program as well as continue to strengthen the academic program whilst ensuring a positive boarding experience for each of the young men in his care.

Adrian and his wife Rowena look forward to their own children Darcy (11), Lara (8) and Amelie (5) growing up in this vibrant community.



Mr Adrian Byrne  
Director of Boarding  
Saint Ignatius' College,  
Riverview Sydney

### St Patrick's College Townsville

This year we have welcomed Mrs Anne-Marie Hammond as Director of Boarding at St Patrick's College Townsville. Anne-Marie has been a member of our College leadership team for five years, previously as Director of Faith & Identity. Anne-Marie has had an extensive career in education in both Queensland and the ACT. In 2016 she was the recipient of a Queensland Spirit of Catholic Education award for her work in establishing the Mercy Girls in Action community service

program and coordinating and leading the Sony Foundation Children's Holiday Camp and World Challenge expeditions to Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

"I am thrilled to have taken on this new role in the College," said Anne-Marie. "I have come into this role already knowing most of the boarders so it has been a smooth transition."

"This is a very special community of girls from Western and Far Northern Queensland as well as the Torres Strait and Papua New Guinea. Our location overlooking the Strand beachfront and Magnetic Island is just spectacular, it's a gift, and our girls take full advantage of their seaside lifestyle."

In her previous role at the College, Anne-Marie worked to embed the Mercy values into all areas of College life and she is eager to work further on this in the boarding context.



Mrs Anne-Marie  
Hammond  
Director of Boarding  
St Patrick's College,  
Townsville, QLD

## New Heads of Boarding

### The Australian Ballet School Melbourne

Benita Bowles is a qualified primary and secondary school teacher, with many years of experience in teaching and in positions of leadership across different sectors in education.

Benita's affiliation with boarding began four years ago when she took up a position of Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing at St Patrick's College in Townsville. From there, an exciting opportunity arose when she was offered and accepted the position of Director of Boarding at St Patrick's, managing, guiding and supporting 140 students. Most of the young women in boarding at St Patrick's were from remote Aboriginal Communities of the Northern Cape of Queensland and from the Torres Strait Islands in Far North Queensland. There were girls from remote farming districts and there were girls who were from as far south as Brisbane. With such a culturally diverse boarding population, it was critical to build relationships that were genuine; listening, engaging, supporting and guiding. Communicating closely with students themselves, with their families and with their communities formed the basis of such a successful boarding programme. It is the connection made with these young people that makes this work so rewarding. The time spent listening and working together to talk about and share stories from their communities, discuss post-school options and decisions of their plans and futures was such a privilege. The Boarding House provided a strong, reliable structure for the girls and it was a responsive environment that provided an individualised experience.

At the beginning of 2018, Benita returned home to Melbourne to be closer to her family and to take up her second position as Head of Boarding with The Australian Ballet School. Marilyn Rowe House is a small boarding house of The Australian Ballet School situated in the beautiful tree-lined suburb of Parkville, Melbourne. Here, 35 young boys and girls with a passion for and expertise in ballet come together in this boarding community. Our Boarding community is diverse, comprising interstate, international and local boarders living and sharing experiences, promoting and exploring various perspectives of identity and culture but all with a passion for ballet and having already achieved this passion at an elite level. It is a privilege to be a part of their journey and to contribute to the lives of these young men and women, encouraging them to follow their dreams, be compassionate and curious and to be a bigger part of our ever changing global community.



Mrs Benita Bowles  
Head of Boarding  
The Australian Ballet School,  
Melbourne, VIC

### Snowy Mountains Grammar School Jindabyne

Martin joins the dynamic leadership and teaching team at SMGS as the Head of Student Programs and Development. He was also appointed as the executive staff member overseeing the SMGS Boarding House.

Martin is an experienced educator with a passion for the outdoors. He holds a Bachelor of Science, specialising in Chemistry and Geology, and a Bachelor of Education, and enjoys teaching all subjects within the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) areas.

For the past fifteen years, Martin has been in charge of a boarding campus based in the Snowy Mountains, catering for students at all levels of skiing and snowboarding ability, from beginner to national level. This has provided him with a wealth of experience in organisation, planning, logistics, risk management and care for students, both in regular snowsports lessons and in training and racing opportunities. At SMGS, Martin is passionate about creating a diverse range of educational opportunities to motivate all students to achieve.

Within his role, Martin will be responsible for the co-ordination of the Elite Snowsports Academy, including the organisation and logistics for day and boarding students, parents, resorts, instructors, training and transport.

This is a pivotal role for our school and we warmly welcome him and his family to our school community.



Mr Martin Philpott  
Head of Student Programs  
and Development  
Snowy Mountains Grammar  
School,  
Jindabyne, NSW

### The Hutchins School Hobart

Mr James Bourne has been appointed Head of Boarding at The Hutchins School.

James commenced working at The Hutchins School in May of 2017 and immediately made a positive impact with his colleagues and the boys in his classes. James came to us from Melbourne Grammar School, where he was the Head of Design and Technology and a Senior Boarding Tutor in a boarding house of 114 boys. During his six years' living and working in boarding at Melbourne Grammar School, James implemented study routines for students to ensure their academic studies were on track, he also implemented a mindfulness program to promote positive wellbeing. James believes the pastoral care of boys is fundamental in education and he strives to create a happy, secure and supportive environment where every boy feels included, valued and respected.

James, together his wife Jo, two boys, Oliver and Harry and daughter, Cerys are looking forward to living on campus and embracing boarding life at our School.



Mr James Bourne  
Head of Boarding  
The Hutchins School  
Hobart, TAS



## New Heads of Boarding

### The Scots College Sydney

Kevin Brennan is the newly appointed Director of Boarding and member of the School Leadership Team at The Scots College. Kevin moved to Australia in 2017 from Wellington College in the UK, a school of 1050 students including 850 boarders. Kevin spent nine years at Wellington College following a period as a professional rugby player with London Irish and Nottingham. Kevin's academic pursuits include a BSc (Hons) in Sports Science, an MSc in The Science and Medicine of Athletic Performance from Oxford University and Secondary School teaching qualifications through Loughborough University. At Wellington College he taught Anatomy & Physiology and Sports Science, in addition to holding the position of Director of Rugby (in his first four years) Kevin was also 1st XV coach throughout his time at the College. During his final five years at Wellington College Kevin was a boarding Housemaster of a boys boarding house of 60 students.

Whilst in the UK Kevin undertook substantial professional development in the area of Boarding, completing a certificate in Pastoral Care within Boarding Education through the Boarding Schools Association (BSA), Advanced Coaching, Mindfulness in Schools, and, Positive Education and Well Being with the University of Pennsylvania.

As Director of Boarding at The Scots College Kevin will oversee five boarding houses - with boys from Sydney City, Rural and Country NSW, Indigenous students, international students and sons of Australian expats. He will combine his Director of Boarding role with being the Housemaster of Aspinall, teacher of PDHPE and 2nd XV rugby coach. Kevin lives on campus with his wife Sian and three children, Ethan (7), Kianna (5) and Caleb (2). As Director of Boarding he hopes to build on the many strengths of Scots Boarding, whilst also creating a secure, supportive and open learning environment in which all students and staff can thrive and develop.



Mr Kevin Brennan  
Director of Boarding  
The Scots College,  
Sydney, NSW

### The Scots School Bathurst

John Day has taken up the role of Director of Boarding at The Scots School in Bathurst in 2018. John has enjoyed his 25 years as an educator taking on leadership roles as an Assistant Boarding Coordinator, Head of Rugby, Head of Mathematics and most recently as a Deputy Headmaster. The variety of areas in which John has driven programs reflects his belief in the importance of educating the whole person and he is excited to see so many programs already in place at The Scots School from academic and sporting to spiritual and social.

John is not one to use the existence of facilities and programs as a tick-a-box for good education. "It doesn't matter how good the bike is, you still have to pedal it." John has hit the ground running in his new role, introducing an electronic system which will simplify administration across the boarding houses, while at the same time providing up to date pastoral and location information for each boarder. "I am keen to allow staff to spend more time in their core role of being present with the boarders." In addition to the Director of Boarding role at The Scots School, John has taken on a residential role as a Head of Bulkeley House which has just over 50 boys. John is supported in his roles by his wife Marita and three children Chelsea (15), Sarah-Joy (12) and Hannah (10) and they are enjoying being a part of the family atmosphere that thrives by having both Boys and Girls Boarding Houses on the one 43 Hectare property.



Mr John Day  
Director of Boarding  
The Scots School,  
Bathurst, NSW

### Wenona Sydney

Nonie Ayling was appointed as Head of Boarding at Wenona in March 2017, having previously worked as Director of Boarding at Stuartholme School in Brisbane, where she worked closely with Indigenous students from Cape York, and Deputy Head of Boarding at Ascham in Sydney, where she implemented an innovative partnership program with the Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME).

Nonie's strong background in establishing culturally competent school environments has made her a welcome addition to the Wenona Boarding House, which caters for up to 50 boarders from local, rural and international backgrounds.

"The chance to live and work at Wenona alongside students from a diverse range of cultures and countries is a genuine privilege. It's an opportunity for students and staff alike to learn about cultural differences and promote tolerance, respect and understanding, which are important values in our modern-day global culture".

"The House is a warm, vibrant and friendly place, but it is also a sanctuary where girls eat, sleep, relax and study. There is a strong sense of camaraderie here. This ensures that all girls feel valued and part of our tight-knit community. We enjoy close relationships with parents and keep in regular contact with them to ensure that whatever our students aspire to be, we support them. The most rewarding aspect of my job is to see each girl achieve her own personal best."



Mrs Nonie Ayling  
Head of Boarding  
Wenona,  
Sydney, NSW

## From the Chairman



Pauline Turner  
Chairman

With the start of the new year and term one almost a past memory, I am excited to be penning my first piece for our wonderful 'Lights Out' 2018 March edition. As usual this journal is full of fabulous articles that relate directly to the boarding industry and provide our school staff with deeper understanding of issues related to boarding students' lives at school.

ABSA's 'Taking the Reins' conference at Bond University on the Gold Coast was well attended by many of our new Heads of Boarding and Staff. This conference is one of the best events in our yearly calendar as it provides ample time for delegates to build networks while strengthening their unawareness of the convergence of boarding and School environments. The excitement I feel as I listen to this new generation of our boarding leaders with strong visions and passion to develop their boarding communities into flourishing and vital aspects of any school privileged enough to have a boarding community is remarkable.

At our first Board meeting of the year the focus was on developing our Strategic Plan for 2018-2021. The future of boarding is exciting for us all. Membership and support of our members is an area we are committed to as an Association. We strive to ensure all member schools feel well supported and engaged in boarding news and developments. We continue to remain focused on Accreditation and Training at industry level - the assessment of the National Standard is well underway.

Training is a large part of the ABSA mandate and it is hard to believe that so far this year already 300 people have attended the Duty of Care workshops across Australia. This is a critical area for us to continue to develop and stretch our boarding staff with current and relevant professional development. The ABSA staff are excited to be able to continue to meet with our Member schools, Principals and Heads of Boarding and to encourage and assist with Boarding Reviews and boarding advice when needed. Please don't hesitate to call Richard Stokes if you are interested in holding a review or to ask advice.

A reminder that our International Conference for 2018 will be hosted in Melbourne on 2-4 October. Please be sure to book early. I take this opportunity to thank our Sponsors for their contribution to our Association. We have a number of new companies coming on board and the ABSA staff work hard to ensure these companies are able to provide good support to our member schools with relevant products and services. On behalf of the Board we look forward to meeting with many of you over the year at the various state and national functions. We thank you for your support of our Association as we work to support and empower the Boarding environment across our schools.

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## Coming Events

### AUS

Visit [www.boarding.org/our-events](http://www.boarding.org/our-events) to see upcoming Duty of Care Workshops.

#### 1 May 2018

Qld Symposium,  
The Southport School

#### 10 May 2018

SA Symposium

#### 13 - 19 May 2018

**National Boarding Week**

#### 14 May 2018

Vic Symposium,  
Caulfield Grammar School

#### 17 May 2018

WA Symposium, PLC, Perth

#### 5 June 2018

NSW Symposium

#### 2 - 4 October 2018

**ABSA International Boarding Conference,  
Melbourne**

### USA

#### 15 - 17 April, 2018

TABS/NAIS Global Symposium  
New Orleans

#### 21 - 26 July 2018

TABS Summer Session  
Boston University  
Boston, Massachusetts

### UK

#### 1 - 3 May 2018

Annual Conference for Heads,  
Brighton

#### 9 - 11 July 2018

Annual Conference for Nurses and Matrons,  
Solihull

### NZ

#### 29 May - 1 June 2018

NZBSA Annual Conference,  
Christchurch

Australian Boarding Schools Association Ltd.

Postal: PO Box 5569, Brendale, QLD. 4500

Office: Unit 6, 3 Hinkler Court, Brendale, QLD 4500

P + 61 7 3205 4940 F + 61 7 3205 6567

E [absa@boarding.org.au](mailto:absa@boarding.org.au) W [www.boarding.org.au](http://www.boarding.org.au)

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## Would You Like Your Boarding School Featured in Lights Out?

We plan to feature two schools each edition. All you need to do, is write a brief article (400 to 1000 words) and send us some high resolution photos

Send all files to:  
[absa@boarding.org.au](mailto:absa@boarding.org.au)  
by 1st May 2018



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