

# St George Girls High School

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Monthly Bulletin

December 2020

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## Presentation Day

Thursday 10 December  
School Hall

## 2021 Commencement Dates

Friday 29 January  
Years 7, 11 and 12 and  
Year 10 Peer Support Leaders

Monday 1 February  
Years 8, 9 and 10

## Principal's Message

Dear Parents and Students,

### Thank you to the SGGHS Community

We have made it to the final Gazette correspondence for the 2020 school year and there is no doubt that this has certainly been a very unusual and uncertain year, as we have needed to respond to and manage learning continuity during a global pandemic. I would like to thank all members of the community for their support over the year and I am very grateful to be in the privileged and trusted position to lead such a great school.

I would like the 2020 school year to not be defined by the pandemic, but rather by the way we as a school and community have responded to it. It is this response that I am most proud of and I take great pride in knowing that our school has served each of our students well in preparing for the uncertainties that we have now come to expect from life.

As I write my final contribution for the year, the uncertainty continues and the pandemic is far from over globally, but I know that if our SGGHS learners apply the same lessons they have learnt this year and utilise the skills they have honed through this experience, then they can confidently navigate their way through whatever may come.

There is no doubt that these uncertain times have brought challenges for everyone, but more importantly this experience has also brought us gifts. We have had the opportunity to take a pause, a deep breath and to reflect upon what is really important in our lives. You might expect that the Principal's final message to the community should talk about what our students have missed out on, however I think it is important instead to focus on and appreciate what our learners have gained.

Our students have gained the insight and experience to be the change our world needs. The change to focus on appreciation, gratitude, support and collaboration. This year we have seen the beginning of a movement that showed a heightened appreciation for teachers, healthcare professionals, and all essential workers who have risked their lives everyday, so that we as a society can stay safe and healthy. So despite this pandemic taking many things from us this year, it has also given us the opportunity to highlight and appreciate what is truly important in the world - family, friends, health, education, community and liberty.

This year more than ever, I would like to acknowledge the work of our dedicated teachers. Teachers who are passionate about the education of their students and who have strived to provide the very best learning experiences and opportunities. In 2020, our teachers have needed to go above and beyond to safeguard learning continuity, our teachers have needed to become experts on Google Classroom and Zoom to make sure learning was not compromised, as we transitioned from face-to-face learning to remote learning and back to face-to-face learning again, while also managing a wide range of new and changeable restrictions and guidelines for schools that needed to be adhered to and implemented.

I have witnessed firsthand the commitment and innovation from our teachers as they have worked individually and collectively to find solutions and create new learning experiences and opportunities for their students to ensure that learning was not compromised, in what has been a complex and changeable period in our human history.

I must say that having taken a moment to look back over the year and actively reflect on 2020, I can confidently say that we should feel very proud of our collective efforts to safeguard the health, wellbeing and educational continuity of our learners under what can only be described as the most unusual and unpredictable set of circumstances. Well done to the SGGHS school community, we made it through a difficult and changeable year and more importantly thank you to our students for continuing to enrich our school. It has been an absolute pleasure working and learning alongside you this year. I now look forward to a more normal school year ahead that will hopefully will see many of our usual school routines, activities and highly anticipated events resume.

## Year 12 Graduation Ceremony



On Friday 20 November we were finally permitted to successfully host the Year 12 Graduation Ceremony and Garden Party on school grounds. The afternoon was a perfect celebration and it was so nice to share this with the family members of the Class of 2020. The Year 12 Graduation Ceremony looked very different this year as we were required to have the event professionally livestreamed across a number of venues across the school.



Despite the necessary COVID-19 guidelines and regulations that needed to be adhered to, on all accounts the students and their families had a very enjoyable afternoon that appropriately celebrated this important milestone in their educational journey.

I hope that our Year 12 graduates take away with them what they have absorbed, not only the information, knowledge and skills, but also our school's values, culture and history and use this experience to make a difference in the world they have now inherited and will have the opportunity to contribute to.





I want Year 12 to know that we are all very proud of them and grateful that our paths crossed. I will remember the Class of 2020 as resilient, courageous, and extraordinary learners. I have been inspired by their compassion and care for others, and I would be honoured to be remembered as the Principal of the Class of 2020 in the years to come. Congratulations Year 12...and remember the best for each of you is yet to come. Well done, you made it through and more importantly thank you for enriching our school over the past six years.



### **More Great HSC News Just In.....**

We had already received some wonderful HSC news regarding the performance of the students that I shared in my November Gazette article. Since my last correspondence, the school has been advised that Year 12 Visual Arts students Jade Ma and Ayisna Takhel have had their Body of Works selected for inclusion in ARTEXPRESS. To receive a nomination is always a wonderful achievement (this is even more impressive when you take into account the circumstances that surrounded the HSC year for our students), but to now be selected for inclusion is even more special. Congratulations to Jade and Ayisna, we are very proud of this achievement from two of our very talented Year 12 Visual Arts students.

We have also had the Major Textiles Projects of two of our students Tiffany Li and Helena Tang nominated for inclusion in Texstyle, the annual exhibition of outstanding Major Textiles Projects developed by HSC Textiles and Design students. This is a great achievement and one that is even more notable when you consider that these two students completed this course via the Sydney Distance Education High School as we were unable to offer this course at SGGHS in 2020.

I offer a warm congratulations to each of our Year 12 graduates and I bid a fond farewell to the Year 12 parents, carers and families who have supported the school over their daughter's time at the school. The Class of 2020 are a very special group for me as we began our learning together here in 2015. Over that time we have grown together and watching the students embrace this year has validated the great work we collectively undertake to serve our learners and to prepare them so well for life beyond the gates of St George. I now look forward to reporting on the 2020 HSC results in my first Gazette correspondence next year.

### **2020/2021 Prefect Induction Assembly**

On Wednesday 18 November we were able to appropriately host the 2020/21 Prefect Induction ceremony on school grounds. This special assembly was conducted to recognise and celebrate the achievements of the outgoing Prefect body as well as formally induct the newly elected Prefects for 2020/2021 in the presence of the very proud parents/carers and Year 11 cohort peers. I would thank all of our outgoing Prefects on behalf of the staff and students for their outstanding leadership over the last twelve months, they have navigated their leadership duties through uncharted waters with flexibility and creativity.

I would also like to congratulate our newly inducted Prefects. Their investiture into this notable office marks a major milestone, both in their learning journey at St George as well as in their personal development. The school can see the great potential in each of our newly inducted leaders, and their election is a testament to the confidence their peers also have their leadership capability.

I look forward to watching our newly elected Prefects utilise their role as an opportunity to continue to grow, learn and make a difference. I know each of our leaders will represent our school with pride and respect and I look forward to working together over the next 12 months.

I wish to thank Idy Zhao who has been our school pianist for the last year for her service to the school. I am also pleased to announce that Anna Wong will take up this position for the coming year and it was wonderful to have Anna perform as part of the ceremony in front of her peers and family members.



## Green Day



On Thursday 19 November St George Girls High School hosted its annual Green Day. I am always a very proud Principal to see our school and its students unified in its commitment to environmental awareness and sustainability. I was so thrilled that we were able to host a COVID Safe Green day that allowed us to interrupt the regular school routine for one day with the sole purpose of placing environmental awareness front and centre of our thinking. It allows us to acknowledge the collective responsibility we all share to protect and safeguard the precious local and global environment.

Green Day is a perfect example of collaboration between staff and students within our school. I would like to thank Mrs Duffy for her passion, drive and personal commitment to environmental educational awareness and programs in our school.

To co-ordinate the workshops and students for the day is no easy undertaking and this year all activities needed to be planned in line with the DoE guidelines in place, adding a further organisational and logical element into the mix. I know we all appreciate the passion and energy that Mrs Duffy and the Enviro Council invests into this day and I also thank the SGGHS staff who assisted in a range of capacities over the day.



The students embraced the day with their usual St George energy and I would like to extend a special thank you to the Enviro Team, in particular its Executive members who worked so diligently to support the running of Green Day.



## Year 7 Growth Mindset Presentation

On Monday 16 November our Year 7 students engaged in a Growth Mindset Presentation delivered by Daniela Falecki. This is an annual presentation that inducts our students into the research that underpins the Growth Mindset thinking model and provides our high potential learners with valuable strategies and tools to draw upon as they navigate through their high school years. Thank you to Ms Sandra Zoupantis who made the necessary arrangements for this presentation to take place, her commitment to the importance of the Growth Mindset approach is very much appreciated and she has completed significant work to embed this thinking across the school.



## Presentation Day

Our Annual Presentation Day will be held on Thursday 10 December on site in the School Hall. This year the Presentation Day Ceremony will look and feel a little different as we are required to run a series of separate assemblies to celebrate the achievements for each cohort group. The organisation for the Presentation Day Assemblies is as follows;

- **Year 7** – Period 1 at 8:45am
- **Year 8** – Period 3 at 10:15am
- **Year 11** – Period 4 at 11:10am
- **Year 9** – Period 6 at 12:30pm
- **Year 10** – Period 7 at 1:50pm

Students will have normal lessons on the other periods of the day when they are not attending their cohort Presentation Day Assembly. I would like to remind the school community that this is compulsory school day for all students. The ceremony will be a wonderful opportunity to celebrate student achievement and excellence across a range of domains for the 2020 school year and I look forward to sharing in and attending this celebration throughout the day.

As such a large number of parents and family members are unable to be appropriately accommodated on site, the Presentation Day Assemblies for each cohort group will be Livestreamed and a recording of each assembly will also be made available to students and their parents/carers to view at a convenient time and to keep as a record of their daughter's 2020 achievements.

I am very grateful to Miss Dwyer, Ms Di Leo and Mrs Louskos for the work they have undertaken to co-ordinate and plan this highly anticipated whole school event and thank them for accommodating the added logistical requirements needed to host such a large-scale school event in consideration of the current NSW Health and DoE guidelines in place.

A special mention must also go to the very skilled Mr Moroney, who has worked behind the scenes to ensure that we have all the technology required to Livestream and record our Presentation Day Assemblies to share with our school community.

I cannot even begin to articulate the level of effort that has been invested behind the scenes to get this event across the line. It has been a mammoth undertaking and I am so proud of our collective commitment to ensure that our students and their families have the opportunity to appropriately celebrate their achievements. I do look forward to being able to take this event back to the Sydney Town Hall next year and have all our students, parents and community members in attendance together. I have already locked in our booking for the SGGHS Presentation Day 2021 to ensure that this occurs.

Wednesday 16 December is the official last day of the school term for students. Reports for Years 7-9 will be issued on the Student Parent Portal on this day. Year 10 were issued with their reports last Thursday 3 December and the students have also completed their Personal Best Report Interviews on Monday 7 December.

I am also aware that some families are planning to commence their vacation earlier than the dates above. If you wish your daughter to be granted leave for family or personal reasons, please indicate this to me in writing as soon as possible. Please also state the expected date of her return to school in 2021 so that we retain her position at St George. The 2021 school year commences with two School Development Days for staff on Wednesday 27 January and Thursday 28 January for staff. Students in **Years 7, 11 and 12 (as well as any Year 10 peer support leaders) return on Friday 29 January** and all remaining students in **Years 8, 9 and 10 will return on Monday 1 February**.

### **Farewell to SGGHS Members of Staff**

Each year we farewell valued members of our school community who have made an incredible difference to the lives of the students. At the end of 2020, two of our highly experienced and respected teachers will retire. I would like to acknowledge the work of Mrs Lois Aspin who after 47 years of service with the Department of Education and 24 years of service as a dedicated TAS Head Teacher, Teacher and more recently Technology Co-ordinator at St George Girls High School will retire.

Ms Jane Potaka one of our very talented English teachers will also retire, after teaching at SGGHS for 9 years and serving the Department of Education for 32 years. Both of our retirees this year are highly skilled and respected educators who have invested a significant part of their teaching careers, serving the students of St George Girls High School. I wish both of these exceptional teachers all the very best for the next chapter in their life journey and thank them very much for the quality educational experiences they have provided for the students at our school during their time at our school.

Mr Ronan Murray a highly valued member of our Social Science Faculty who has taught at SGGHS for 10 years will move to a new school from the start of next year. This merit appointment will allow Mr Murray to continue to serve high potential learners at Sydney Girls High School and we wish him all the very best as he prepares to commence at his new school.

### **Student Achievements**

One of the best parts of the school day as a school Principal is receiving correspondence or advice about the range of successes your students achieve. I wanted to take a moment to acknowledge some of the student achievements I have been informed about before the year draws to a close.

- Congratulations to Cate Armstrong in Year 12 who has had her entry in the 2020 HTANSW Extension History Essay Prize on the topic of "The extent and impact of the erasure of female agency in the historiography of the 'Wild West'," awarded the place of Runner Up. This is a wonderful achievement for Cate and for our school.
- Well done to Karina Dogra in Year 7 who participated in The Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition 2020 and has been awarded a Gold Certificate for her contribution. This is a tremendous achievement and certainly one worth acknowledging this month.

I would like to wish all members of the school community a wonderful festive season and a very happy new year. We have certainly had an interesting and challenging year in 2020 and I am already focused on the opportunities and success that await us in 2021. I am sincerely humbled as always, to be the Principal of this fabulous school and I very much look forward to working alongside you all in 2021 when we will commence our next body of important work that will underpin and drive our 2021-2024 Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP) . Thank you for your continued support to make our school a great place to work and learn. Happy holidays to all and I look forward to seeing you all in 2021 to do it all again. Keep safe.

Ms Betty Romeo  
**Principal**

## Deputy Principal's Report – Teaching and Learning

### Years 7 – 9 Reports

**R**eports for Years 7-9 will be available via the parent portal on Wednesday 16 December. It is important that students and parents take the time to carefully read their teachers' comments and to take their advice about strategies for improvement in 2021. This month's study skills tip will provide some thought provoking questions to consider as you reflect on your performance and achievement in 2020.

### Parenting Ideas – 'Insight' Articles

This month's article from 'Insights' is '**Modelling Self-Kindness**'. In this tough parenting year parents can be lighthouses for children's self-kindness and self-compassion practices.

### Study Skills Tip for December

This month's study skills tip is '**End of Year Reflection**'. With the end of the year fast approaching it is a good time for students to reflect on their approach to school this year. The article looks at reflecting on the year and identifying what worked, what were the greatest challenges, what can you do to build on your strengths and how to manage distractions and procrastination as you move into the new year.

### SGGHS Professional Learning – Monthly Update

As we head into the final days of the year and look back on what professional learning has taken place within the school - at faculty and whole school levels - it really does provide a true picture about the ongoing commitment and flexibility displayed by the staff at SGGHS especially during a pandemic. To finish the year, staff have participated in collaboration meetings around the new school excellence cycle and the Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP) components, opportunities to update their Accreditation documentation by identifying different types of professional learning they have participated against the teaching standards and completed online CPR and Anaphylaxis training in preparation for the face-to-face sessions to be conducted on the final School Development Day of the year.



There has continued to be a focus on programming, resourcing and modifying teaching and learning programs across all stages as well as preparations for our 2021 whole-school programs including Year 7 Transition, Year 11 SEED and our Wellbeing Assemblies and guest presenters. We also held 2 professional learning days in the last month with the Wellbeing Team and the Executive Leadership Team.



## Wellbeing Professional Learning Day

This year, the wellbeing team focused on professional learning around Department of Education policies and legislation and revised our current structures and processes to better align to updates and key initiatives around student wellbeing. We were fortunate enough to have our School Psychologist present to the team on the role of the School Counselling Service and how to best work alongside this service to support our students. We also looked at the most recent Tell Them From Me (TTFM) student data linked to wellbeing areas and what this data showed to inform our planning for wellbeing assemblies, activities and guest presenters in 2021. The team also were presented with the revised wellbeing structures in terms of meetings and the SGGHS referral processes that will be put in place from the beginning of 2021. These new processes will be issued to all students, staff and parents at the start of the new year.



## Executive Leadership Team Professional Learning Day

This year, the focus of our Executive Leadership Day was on School Excellence and working through the Situational Analysis process which included the SEF S-aS completed by all staff. In preparing for the development of the new Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP), staff have engaged in a number of collaboration meetings to complete the 2020 school assessment survey against the school excellence framework domains, elements and themes. We were able to identify areas of strength as well as focus areas and themes moving forward into the next 4 year plan. The Executive had the opportunity to look at different data sources including SCOUT data linked to NAPLAN and HSC results, TTFM student data comparing results from 2015, 2018 and 2020 and the High Potential and Gifted Education Attitudes and Teaching Practice teacher survey. Analysing the data against current research, evidenced-based practice and key DoE policies and compliance requirements, the Executive were able to highlight common themes for inclusion into the new SIP and began to draft key initiatives and activities linked specifically to collaborative practice around explicit teaching. The second Executive Leadership Day will be held early in Term 1 next year and the focus will continue to be on developing our target areas for the new SIP, identifying the purpose for each strategic direction as well as key initiatives, activities, success criteria and improvement measures.





## Back to School – 2020 Key Dates

Below outlines the starting dates for students returning in 2021. All students in Years 8-12 will assemble at the start of period 1, either in the Hall or the Gym, for a welcome back assembly, where school procedures and general information will be outlined. Following this students will have a meeting with their Deputy Principal and Year Advisors.

- **Wednesday 27 January** – School Development Day for Staff
- **Thursday 28 January** – School Development Day for Staff
- **Friday 29 January** – Years 11, 12 return to school, 8:45am start (Hall)
- **Friday 29 January** – Year 7 first day of High School, 9:30am start (Hall)
- **Monday 1 February** – Years 8, 9, 10 return to school, 8:45am start (Gym)

As this is the final gazette for the year, I would like to thank all staff, parents and students for the ongoing support throughout what has certainly be a very long and challenging year for all. I wish you all a very safe and happy holiday and I look forward to working with you all in 2021.

Ms Pamela Abson

**Deputy Principal – Teaching and Learning**

## CAPA News

**W**ell, we have just about made to the end of what has been a challenging year for everyone. I am so proud of all the amazingly creative CAPA students and our inspiring teachers who have shown so much resilience and dedication throughout 2020.

We congratulate all of our 2020 HSC students for their incredible work and achievements, this year in Drama, Music and Visual Arts.

The faculty is proud that once again that student major works and performances have been nominated and selected to be included in NESA showcases of exemplary work in 2020.

A huge congratulations go to our Year 12 **Drama students, Cate Armstrong, Sophie Indraputri and Katrina Hayler** on their nominations for **OnStage** for their individual performances, and to our **Visual Arts students, Angela Cheung, Jade Ma and Ayisna Takhel** on their nominations for **ArtExpress**.

The faculty was elated to receive news that the work of Jade Ma and Ayisna Takhel has been selected for inclusion in the Artexpress, Hazelhurst Art Gallery exhibition and the Virtual/ Online Exhibition. To consistently jump the hurdles of 2020 and achieve such success is a credit to our dedicated students.

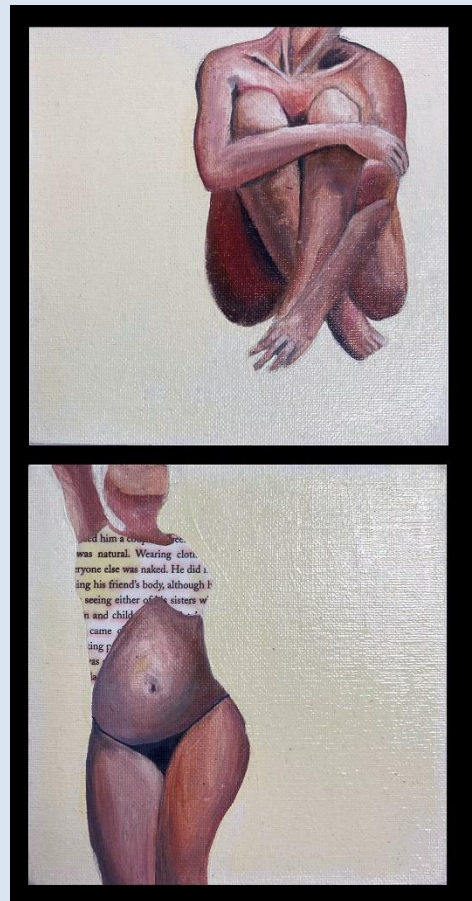
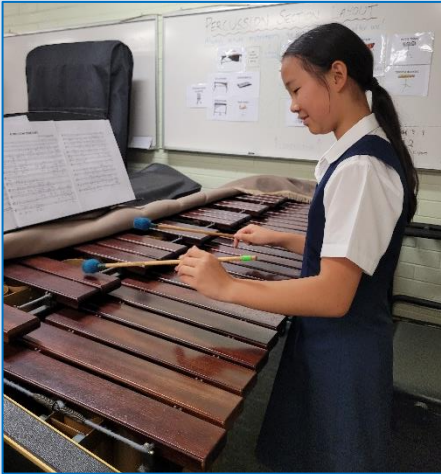


The CAPA faculty also thanks the wonderful parents, Mothers committee and P&C for their continued support. We wish all of our school community a safe and relaxing summer break and we look forward to 2021.

Ms Lisa Wright

**Head Teacher Creative and Performing Arts**

## Creative and Performing Arts







**Excursion to Onstage**



**Year 8 Drama Students**



**Year 8 Drama Students**



**Year 9 Drama Group Performance**



**Year 9 Drama Rehearsal**



**Year 10 Drama Rehearsal**



**Year 11 Performance Rehearsal**



**Year 11 Drama Class**



**Year 11 Rehearsal**

## Parents and Citizens' Association

**W**ell it's finally the end of Term 4. We managed to hold our last meeting of 2020 in person. Thank you to those parents who attended our last meeting in person. We heard about the school's strategic plan 2021-2024, the school budget and various projects occurring within the school. We will give consideration to zooming our physical meetings next year given the high level of interest in virtual meetings. We farewell the Year 12 girls and wish them success in their future endeavours. Please consider attending our first P&C meeting for 2021 on 25 February at 7pm to hear more about what's happening in the school. All parents are welcome. Have a safe and happy summer holiday. I look forward to seeing everyone in Term 1 2021.

Regards

Sharon Khan

**President, Parents and Citizens'**

[sggh.pca@gmail.com](mailto:sggh.pca@gmail.com)

## Mothers' Committee

**W**e have just had our last meeting for the year. Thank you to Ms Romeo and our guest speakers for keeping us informed of activities and plans for the school and their departments throughout what has been an unusual and sometimes challenging year.

Thank you to the staff (teaching and administration) for all your help through the year and the beautiful and tasty spread provided to us at this last meeting for the year.

A special thank you to Ms Romeo, the Executive leadership team, teaching and administration staff for steering us all through uncertain times during the height of the Covid 19 pandemic heights. We sincerely appreciate all your effort.

Last, but not least, thank you to all the volunteers, staff, parents and students that have helped and participated at the uniform shop and various events throughout the year. We are all disappointed that the Mother Daughter dinner wasn't held this year, but we are excitedly looking forward to next year!

### Next Meeting: Wednesday 3 February at 10am in the School Library.

This will be our first meeting in 2021 and we are looking forward to welcoming the parents of our new students as well as those of returning students.

### Uniform Shop News

For those still finalising their uniform purchases for next year, the uniform shop will be open at the following times.

Wednesday, 9 December, 1:00pm – 3:30pm

Monday, 14 December, by appointment

Friday, 29 January, 1:00pm – 3:30pm (first day of school for Year 7, 11 and 12)

Parent volunteers are still needed during the shop's opening times. Please contact Cathy Anderson on the number below if you are able to help.

Thank you so much to all our faithful volunteers – we really appreciate your help!

Have a happy and safe holiday season.

Kim Le

**President, Mothers' Committee**

Contact Ph: 0421 849 753

Cathy Anderson

**Uniform Shop Coordinator**

Contact Ph: 0423 533 855



## St Georgians

**A**s the 2020 School Year draws to a close, The St Georgians would like to congratulate the students and staff of St George Girls High School on their excellent achievements throughout this very different and difficult COVID year.

The St Georgians would also like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

Our President, Kim Archibald had the privilege of attending the Year 12 Graduation Ceremony last month where she presented a complimentary Life Membership of The St Georgians to the School Captain, Amy Koralis. It was a very impressive and enjoyable event.

### **Save The Date – 2021 Annual Reunion Luncheon and Annual General Meeting**

The St Georgians (formerly known as The Old Girls Union) was formed in 1929, with a twofold purpose – keeping former students in touch, and raising funds for the school. Our main fundraiser each year is our Annual Reunion Luncheon which we hope to be able to hold in 2021. The tentative date for this event is Saturday 1 May 2021. As yet we do not have a venue for the luncheon but please keep this date in mind.

Our 2021 Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday 22 July 2021.

The St Georgians usually meet on the fourth Thursday of each month during school terms, at the St George Leagues Club, 124 Princes Highway Kogarah. However due to the current pandemic situation, these meetings have been suspended. If you need any information about the St Georgians please don't hesitate to contact us at the email or numbers below.

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