

St George Girls High School

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The Gazette

Monthly Bulletin

February 2020
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HSC Excellence Assembly

Thursday 27 February
School Hall
10:55am

Parents & Citizens' Association Meeting

Thursday 27 February
Staff Common Room
7pm

Mothers' Committee Meeting

Wednesday 4 March
Library
10am

Principal's Message

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome back to the 2020 school year. I hope all members of the school community had a wonderful summer break and have returned re-energised and ready to commence what is gearing up to be another exciting year at St George Girls High School. I would like to also extend a very warm welcome to our new students and families that have joined our school for the first time in 2020, in particular our Year 7 and 11 students. We also have welcomed a number of new students into Years 8, 9 and 10 and I am confident that all of our new students and their families will settle in and become part of the St George community in no time at all. Thank you to all our new families and students for choosing St George to be your school, I look forward to getting to know you and working together over the coming years.

Presentation Day

2019 concluded beautifully with the Presentation Day ceremony held at the Sydney Town Hall. It was such a joy to celebrate the achievements of the students and to have former student Ms Josephine Tovey (who is now the Associate News Editor and columnist with Guardian Australia) join us as the guest speaker.

Josephine graduated from St George Girls High School in 2002 and completed a Bachelor of Arts in Media and Communications at the University of Sydney. She began her career at the Sydney Morning Herald, where she worked for more than 10 years, across roles including state political correspondent and education editor. In 2014 she moved to New York City, where she spent three years covering news, including the 2016 presidential election campaign, for the SMH and Age newspapers. She returned to Australia in 2018 and began her new role at the Guardian. It was great to have her in attendance as a proud Alumni and her occasional address was very well-received by the audience.



Thank you to all of the staff, parents and special guests for prioritising the time to attend the ceremony and I must say how proud I felt to be the Principal of our school on this final formal occasion for 2019.

To have all members of our school and broader community in attendance to share in this very special celebration served as a key indicator of how important the work that we all undertake together is, and how much our parents, students and the broader community value the pivotal role that we, as educators, undertake in the lives of the young people, we serve each and every day.

I thank all of our supporters. Our parents, our teachers, our students and community members who prioritise the time to work with us I look forward to another wonderful year ahead where we work together to ensure that all of our students are guided to realise their full academic, social and emotional potential.

The Presentation Day ceremony was so skilfully organised by Mrs Pamela Rahmi, Ms Kate Di Leo, Mrs Panny Louskos and Miss Felicity Dwyer who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure that we hosted an event that appropriately showcased our school and our student's achievements. They did an incredible job once again, to stage such a complex and significant event and I thank them for their organisation, passion and commitment to this special event for our school.



I am pleased to report that the school has settled into its usual routine quite seamlessly and I am grateful to the staff, in particular to our Deputy Principals Ms Pam Abson and Mr Mark Treacy, Year Advisers, timetable team members Mrs Pamela Rahmi and Mr Rob Cowper and the wonderful School Administration and Support Staff for their work in supporting the students into their new classes and routines.

Welcome to Newly Appointed Permanent Teachers and Temporary Teachers for 2020

I would like to congratulate Miss Felicity Dwyer who has been appointed as a permanent member the Science faculty through a highly competitive merit selection process. Miss Dwyer has been working a highly valued temporary teacher at our school and to have her appointed on a permanent basis is just wonderful for our school and the students she will guide as a Science teacher.

I would also like to officially congratulate Mrs Beth Hinton and Ms Laela Delprat who have both been appointed as permanent English teachers at our school from the start of 2020. Both Mrs Hinton and Ms Delprat are very talented and experienced teachers who I know share a passion for teaching high potential learners and are very excited to be on-board in a permanent capacity, following a rigorous merit selection process that was completed at the end of last year.

We continue to have a number of temporary teacher appointments for 2020. Welcome to the following new temporary teachers, Ms Chadia Sucur (Social Science), Ms Sarah O'Brien and Mrs Kristine Leto (CAPA – Visual Arts), Miss Natalia Notkina (English) and Ms Leanne Fong (Science). Welcome back to Mr John Morris (TAS), Miss Thuy Nguyen (Mathematics), Ms Danielle Galea (Languages), Ms Gardner (PDHPE), Mrs Sailsbury (PDHPE), Miss Alexandra Neave (History), Mr Jon Suffolk (CAPA - Drama), Mr David Miller (Science) and Ms Carolyn Wang (Library).

I welcome all of our returning and new members of staff to the St George community and I look forward to working together over the year. Mrs Forster continues to work in a part-time capacity as Head Teacher TAS on Monday-Thursday and Ms Brigitte Barbagallo will relieve as Head Teacher TAS each Friday. Mrs Williamson will continue to work part-time as Head Teacher Wellbeing on Monday-Thursday in 2020 and Mrs Jodie Jospe will relieve as Head Teacher Wellbeing every Friday.

HSC Results

The Class of 2019 have made their school very proud and each year in my first Gazette correspondence I always celebrate the HSC results of our students. The students have once again achieved wonderful results, whilst also pursuing a wide range of interests beyond the classroom – performing arts, debating, sport, outdoor adventures, voluntary work and local community involvement – and have done so with great enjoyment and success.

The Class of 2019 actively embraced all of the opportunities St George had on offer while also demonstrating a genuine passion for learning, and a real commitment to their studies. The students were also supported by a superb team of educators throughout their HSC journey.

Our recent graduates HSC achievements are but one piece of a jigsaw. Of greater importance is the character and the values they have developed over the course of their education, and these will continue to develop, as they take on the grand adventures of life. We should all feel very proud of the following achievements that I would like to celebrate;

- Students who studied **Ancient History** achieved an average exam mark of 83.26, 10.64 marks greater than the state mean, 69% of students received a band 5 or 6 compared to 35.46% state-wide.
- With an average mark of 81.22, 9.29 marks greater than the state mean, 68.33% of **Biology** students achieved a band 5 or 6 compared to 31.31% state-wide.
- With an average exam mark of 84.93, 12.75 marks greater than the state mean, 29.41% of students who studied **Business Studies** were placed in a band 6 compared to only 9.34% state-wide.
- 51.38% of **Chemistry** students achieved a band 5 or 6 compared to 45.93% state-wide.
- With an average exam mark of 84.44, 6.13 marks above the state mean, 100% (up from 88.88% in 2018) of **Drama** students achieved a band 5 or 6 compared to 43.66% state-wide.
- In **Economics**, 26.66% of students achieved a band 6 compared to 15.2% state-wide. 76.66% (up from 62.5% in 2018) of candidates were placed in the top 2 bands compared to 51.73% state-wide.

- With an average exam mark of 85.13, 27.27% of **English Advanced** students received marks over 90 compared to 13.47% state-wide. 84.84% of **English Advanced** students were awarded a band 5 or 6, compared to 61.79% state-wide.
- With an average exam mark of 42.13/50, 95.23% of **English Extension 1** students were placed in the top band 2 bands (E3 and E4) compared to 93.87% state-wide.
- 94.73% (up from 84.61% in 2018) of **English Extension 2** students were placed in the top 2 bands (E3 and E4) compared to 79.79% state-wide.
- 50% of students studying **Food Technology** achieved a band 6 compared to 8.34% state-wide. 83.33% of candidates placed in the top 2 bands compared to 33.17 state-wide.
- **Geography** students achieved an average exam mark of 86.80, 12.14 marks above the state mean, with 100% of students awarded a band 5 or 6, compared to 43.18% state-wide.
- With an average exam mark of 86.20, 13.74 marks above the state mean, 37.5% of students who studied **Information Processes and Technology** were awarded a band 6, compared to 10.64% state-wide.
- With an average mark of 88.07, 14.41 marks above the state, 60% (up from 57.89% in 2018) of **Legal Studies** students achieved a band 6 compared to 13.47% state-wide.
- With an average exam mark of 86.38, 15.7 marks above the state, 90% of **Mathematics Standard 2** students achieved a band 5 or 6 compared to 24.05% state-wide.
- With an average exam mark of 85.10, 44.06% of **Mathematics** students were awarded a band 6, compared to 23.51% state-wide. 75.41% of candidates were awarded a band 5 or 6, compared to 49.18% state-wide.
- 90.31% of **Mathematics Extension 1** students received a mark in the top 2 bands (E3 and E4), compared to 80.11% state-wide.
- 39.28% of students in **Mathematics Extension 2** achieved a mark in the top band (E4), compared to 35.74% state-wide.
- With an average exam mark of 86.09, 12.65 marks above the state, 34.14% of **Modern History** students received a band 6 compared to 9.74% state-wide.
- 47.61% of **History Extension** students placed in the top band (E4) compared to 27.61% state-wide. All candidates studying History Extension were placed in the top 2 bands (E3 and E4).
- **Music 2** students received an average exam mark of 87.13, 100% of students were placed in the top two bands.
- 85.71% (up from 75% in 2018) of **Music Extension** students were placed in the top band (E4) compared to 66.42% state-wide. All candidates studying Music Extension were placed in the top 2 bands (E3 and E4).
- 16.66% of students studying **Personal Development, Health and Physical Education** were awarded a band 6, compared to 6.26% state-wide. 83.32% of students were placed in the top 2 bands compared to 31.26% state-wide.
- 52.37% (up from 41.93% in 2018) of students in **Physics** were awarded marks in the top 2 bands, compared to 36.88% state-wide. 23.8% of students achieved a band 6 compared to 12.37% state-wide.
- 66.66% of **Science Extension** students placed in the top 2 bands (E3 and E4) in the first year this course was offered at SGGHS.
- With an average exam mark of 90.44, 11.95 marks above the state mean, 80% (up from 37.5% in 2018) of **Textiles and Design** students achieved a band 6 compared to 16.36% state-wide. 100% of students were placed in the top 2 bands compared to 53.3% state-wide.
- With an average exam mark of 89.01, 60% (up from 17.64% in 2018) of **Visual Arts** students were awarded a band 6, compared to 15.77% state-wide. 100% of students were placed in the top 2 bands compared to 62.5% state-wide.
- 66.66% of **French Continuers** students were placed in the top 2 bands compared to 64.65% state-wide.
- 85.71% (up from 50% in 2018) of **Japanese Continuers** students achieved a band 6, compared to 27.66% state-wide. 100% of students were awarded a band 5 or 6 compared to 60.18% state-wide.
- 100% of **Japanese Extension** students were placed in the top band (E4) compared to 46.04% state-wide.
- 100% (up from 88.88% in 2017) of **Latin Continuers** students achieved marks in the top two bands compared to 89.3% state-wide.
- 100% of **Latin Extension** students were placed in the top 2 bands (E3 and E4).

The summary of the 2019 HSC results certainly highlights that the students have again achieved quality HSC results. We as a school community all feel very proud of the energy and time that has been invested to ensure that our academic performance continues to place our school as one of NSW High Performing schools.

In 2019 our school ranked 32nd in NSW a further testament to the quality education outcomes we provide for our high potential learners. This success is further evidenced by the following individual achievements:

- Maya Vasic was the Dux of the year attaining the very impressive ATAR of 99.95.
- Maya Vasic was also named as a HSC Top Achiever as she gained some of the highest places in two of her HSC courses. Maja was ranked **1st** in the State in **Latin Continuers** and **13th** in the State in **Mathematics**.
- **Twelve** students were named in the **HSC All-Round Achievers List** for achieving a result in the highest band possible (Band 6 or Band E4) in 10 or more units of courses in their pattern of study. They were Nicola Cafcaros, Cecilia Chenh, Varisara Laosuksri, Hattie Liang, Mia Lo Russo, Mikayla Perry, Shaily Shrestha, Aimee Soenarjo, Nehel Syed, Maja Vasic, Yujia Wang and Rachelle Wu.

In the Creative and Performing Arts we had a number of students whose work was acknowledged as exemplars. Each year exceptional major works and performances are nominated for inclusion in exhibitions which showcase the very best in NSW schools.

- **Bonnie Dong** had her Body of Work titled “Departure” nominated and selected for inclusion in **ARTEXPRESS**.
- Music 2 student, **Claire Hwang** was nominated for possible inclusion in **ENCORE**, a selection of performances and compositions from Higher School Certificate Music students and **Mia Lo Russo** had her musicology elective essay identified as exemplary.
- The Year 12 Drama students' **Group Performance** “Body Parts” and Keira Hinton’s and Preety Thapa’s **Individual Performances** were nominated for **OnSTAGE**, a selection of performances and individual projects from Higher School Certificate Drama students. Congratulations to the following students; Linh Cao, Keira Hinton, Emily Perry, Preety Thapa and Flora Tran.

We are understandably very proud of all the Class of 2019. I would also like to thank the dedicated group of teachers and supportive parents who lived the HSC journey with the students. The students are the ones who have worked tirelessly to achieve their results, however each year there is always a group of core individuals who work alongside the students, helping steer them to such exceptional outcomes. I am now excited to work alongside the Class of 2020 as they navigate their HSC year. I am confident that the next group of students will collaborate together towards impressive outcomes and I wish them all the very best for what will be both a challenging and highly rewarding year ahead.

Important Information for students and parents in Years 11 and 12

All Year 11 students have been issued with a letter that outlines the key expectations the school has of its senior students. This letter requires the signature of parents and students and must be returned to the Deputy Principal in Charge of Year 11, Ms Pam Abson. I strongly encourage all parents to read through the letter carefully to ensure that there is clarity around the school’s expectations of the Year 11 students.

Senior students in Years 11 and 12 are not permitted to leave school grounds at any time throughout the day, this includes recess, lunch and study periods. The students have been informed that if they leave school grounds without permission, it will be regarded as a partial truancy and this will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter. Year 11 students are expected to be at school on time each day and are not permitted to leave before the official end of the school day. The school takes its duty of care over the students very seriously and as such the students are expected to remain on school grounds to maintain their safety.

Year 12 students are permitted to arrive to school late on days when they do not have a timetabled period 1. Year 12 students must arrive by the end of Period 1 and they must ensure that they sign in at the computer kiosk outside Mr Treacy’s office to ensure that they are recorded as present for the day. Year 12 students are able to leave school at the beginning of lunch on days when they do not have a timetabled period 7 or 8. Year 12 students are expected to officially sign out at the computer kiosk outside Mr Treacy’s office prior to their departure on these days. It is now of vital importance that our senior students ensure that they sign in and out appropriately, particularly if they are late or have a permitted late start. SMS messages will continue to be sent home to parents once all official rolls have been submitted for processing.

Year 7 Welcome BBQ

On Friday 31 January the Year 7 Transition program concluded with a welcome BBQ hosted by the P&C for the new Year 7 students and their parents. This was a wonderful afternoon and it was great to see the students happy and settled into their new school environment and the parents talking with other parents and the teachers. I would like to thank Sharon Khan, Cathy Anderson, Sarah Widjaja, Marianne Skinner and Sue Markantonakis for their efforts to plan and prepare the BBQ for the students and their parents.



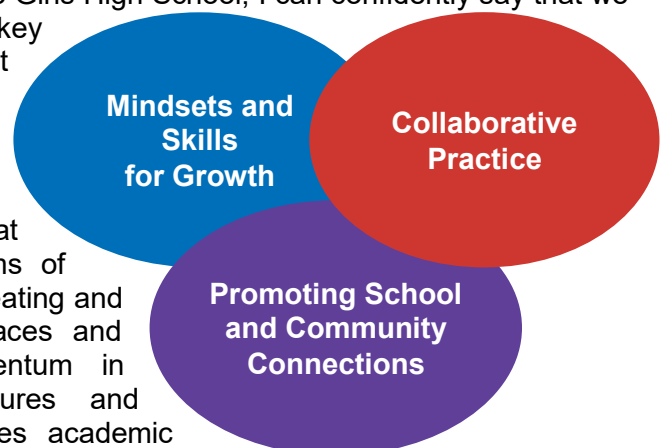
I would also like to thank Year 7 Year Adviser Mrs Danielle Galea and Assistant Adviser Mrs Nardene Dodd for all their work to prepare for the Year 7 Transition Program. Thank you also to our Deputy Principal (Teaching and Learning) Ms Pam Abson for all of her work behind the scenes to ensure that the Year 7 Transition Program meets its intended purpose and to our Head Teacher Wellbeing, Mrs Kaye Williamson and the Year 10 Peer Support leaders for their efforts in running the various Peer Support sessions over the week. The Year 7 Transition Program was a great success and I know the planned activities and sessions have certainly supported the student's transition into their new school.



2018-2020 School Plan Update

Having now completed five years as Principal at St George Girls High School, I can confidently say that we have all invested significant inputs into creating the key processes, procedures and practices to ensure that what we do and how we do it is in line with best practice and best supports our high potential learners.

The inputs and energy invested into this process have been great, however I can also say with confidence that what we now have is momentum. Momentum in terms of driving our school plan forward, momentum in terms of creating and providing quality teaching and learning programs, spaces and experiences for our high potential learners. Momentum in embedding explicit school processes and procedures and momentum in establishing a school culture that values academic excellence, collaborative practice and positive wellbeing.



Our success has come from achieving the goals that we have set for ourselves and that have underpinned our current and previous school plan. It is not the external measures that we should judge ourselves by but rather the internal measures that really make a difference to our students and how we see ourselves as a school.

I am proud of the work we have done collectively, I also know that it is all of the inputs that we have invested into this process that make us successful. I see examples of the inputs that have generated our momentum every day by our teachers, students, parents and community. These inputs are our strength and these inputs have generated our momentum.

This is the final year of the current school plan and on our School Development Day, I had the pleasure of walking the staff through a journey of celebration to highlight the key progress and achievements we have made from a school planning perspective throughout 2019.

I now look forward to completing all of the projects and goals we set for ourselves in the current School Plan in 2020, while also planning and consulting together to develop the blueprint for our next School Plan that will continue to drive us forward together.

SRC Colour Run

On Friday 13 December the Year 10 SRC and SRC Executive organised a school Colour Run to raise funds to complete a foyer refurbishment in the school Hall. For Years 7-10 the event was held on the Hockey Field during sport periods, while any students in Years 11 wishing to participate did so during their timetabled study periods.

Students ran through an agility course, and were doused in different coloured powder as they passed through. The students who participated had a lot of fun and raised valuable funds that will continue to allow us to update and enhance the quality of common spaces across the school. I would like to thank the SRC Executive team and the Year 10 SRC Representatives for their creativity, positivity, flexibility and their willingness to try new and exciting initiatives that continue to enrich the quality of school life at St George Girls High School.



Student Behaviour Management Policy

The school has a very clear policy and set of procedures to managing student behaviour. All DoE schools require clear school structures and procedures to manage student behaviour and it is always important to inform students and parents/carers about these expectations at the start of each school year. Ms Abson went through the key features of the policy at the first whole school assembly and this document can also be accessed via the student and parent portal.

The Behaviour Management policy outlines the core expectations that every student is expected to demonstrate in their actions;

- Respect for self
- Respect for others
- Respect for property
- Respect for the school and broader community

It also describes in detail the school's procedures to respond to and manage the following;

- Inappropriate Behaviour
- Lateness to Class and Lateness to School
- Partial Truancy
- Uniform Breaches

I now would like to encourage all members of the school to read through this document and to become familiar with how the school will manage and respond to these situations should they arise throughout the year.

Swimming Carnival

The annual Swimming Carnival will be held on Wednesday 12 February at Bexley Pool. This is always a highly enjoyable day for the school community and I am looking forward to attending the event to witness the students embracing their events and participating on the day to support their houses.

I would like to thank the PD/H/PE staff and Ms Papas (carnival organiser) in particular for making all the necessary arrangements to ensure that our carnival is again a successful whole school event. I would also like to congratulate our elected House Captains and Vice-Captains for 2020. They will certainly do a fabulous job on the day organising the students and representing their House with flair and fun. Congratulations to the following students:

Allunga

Captain: **Laetitia Cooper**

Vice-Captain: **Carol Farhoud**

Larool

Captain: **Katerina Kalogerakis**

Vice-Captain: **Olivia Li**

Mirrabooka

Captain: **Rana Oral**

Vice-Captain: **Alicia Nguyen**

Mitamit

Captain: **Catherine Weng**

Vice-Captain: **Anna Wong**

I am happy to announce that the 2020 Sport Captain for St George Girls High School is Evangelina Ferekos. Evangelina successfully worked through a rigorous selection process which included a written application and an interview for this role and I know that she will work collaboratively with the carnival organiser, sport organiser, House Captains and Vice-Captains to support the smooth running of all of our sporting carnivals and events, as well as develop some exciting new sporting opportunities and activities for our students to enjoy and participate in over the year.

New Student Welcome Morning Tea

On Thursday 6 February the school hosted a special welcome morning tea for our new students in Years 8-11 to celebrate the successful completion of their first week at SGGHS. It was a great opportunity to check in with our new students to ensure that they are all settling into their new school routine and environment. I know our new students will grow and thrive in their new learning environment and we are so glad to welcome our new students into the SGGHS school community for 2020.



2020 School Contributions, Subject Fees and Building Fund

All students have been issued with the 2020 school contributions and subject fee sheets. The date for final payment is 1 March 2020. Copies of the fee sheets can be obtained from the Finance office and I thank the families that have already finalised their payments so promptly. As a public school we are fortunate to have the support from our families and community to ensure that the provision of quality educational resources and opportunities continue to be made available for all students. If any family is experiencing financial hardship, please contact me directly at school to discuss your individual family circumstances.

Can I also encourage all families to consider contributing to the Building Fund in 2020. Last year the funds raised contributed to the painting of learning spaces across A Block. I am pleased to confirm that this project was completed in 2019 with the support from the Department of Education, that allowed all internal and external spaces in A Block to be painted, including windows, classrooms, stairwells and corridors. This painting has renewed the learning spaces in A Block and this has certainly created more engaging and vibrant teaching and learning spaces for both the students and staff.

This year, we are asking for tax-deductible donations to go towards rising funds to invest towards the new building project. Last year the school was the beneficiary of funds from the estate of Marena Susan Raynor. Any funds raised through Building Fund contributions in 2020 will also be directed towards the realisation of the plan to undertake a building project to replace the demountable classrooms onsite with a new multipurpose teaching and learning space that will service our school well into the future.

This is clearly a more ambitious and medium-term project, however I know with the support from the school and the Department of Education this vision will be realised in the years to come and any support the community can provide to assist with raising valuable funds for this ambitious project will be greatly appreciated.

Mothers' Committee and P&C

We are very fortunate to have two parent bodies that work together to support our school community. I wanted to begin the year by informing all parents, particularly our new parents to the school, that the P&C and Mothers' Committee are wonderful forums that provide you with a strong link to the school. The Mothers' Committee meets on the first Wednesday of each month in the School Library at 10:00am. I attended the first meeting for the year and was delighted to see so many mothers, particularly new mothers to the school in attendance.

The P&C meets on the fourth Thursday of the month and the first P&C meeting for the year will be on Thursday 27 February at 7:00pm in the staff common room. I strongly encourage all parents to attend Mothers' Committee and P&C meetings as it a wonderful conduit for information provision as well as a positive way to participate and support the school Community.

We are very lucky to have such active and vibrant parent bodies I know that each year these bodies look forward to welcoming new parents as new cohorts of students begin. I look forward to connecting with all parents, including our new parents at these meetings throughout the year.

Student Achievements

In each Gazette I like to share any specific individual or group achievements experienced by our students. I am always proud to share our student successes with the community and I know that our students are represented in such a wide variety of areas. I don't always hear about these achievements and therefore welcome updates from students, parents and the community to ensure that I am made aware of any special activities or achievements.

I look forward to seeing many members of our school community over the coming months at the various planned school events. I must say that I was so excited to return back to school for another wonderful year. Welcome back again to what will be another quality year of engaging opportunities at St George Girls High School.

Ms Betty Romeo
Principal

Deputy Principal's Report – Teaching and Learning

Welcome back to the start of the 2020 school year and a very special and warm welcome to all new students and families. It has been great to see our new students, in Year 7 and in Years 8-11 settling well into school life and their studies and I am confident that you will find your time at St George richly rewarding both in and outside the classroom.

As the Deputy Principal – Teaching and Learning, my portfolio focuses largely on implementing Department of Education policies into the school structure and developing and organising programs and workshops across all stages that enhance academic outcomes and achievement and support the school's strategic direction. Some of my responsibilities include coordinating the assessment policies and information for all year groups and managing HSC requirements and examinations. I lead the professional learning for staff at SGGHS, including School Development Days, Twilight sessions and Conferences, support all staff with maintaining their accreditation and work with the Principal on implementing the School Plan.

This year I will be the Deputy Principal working with Years 7, 9 and 11. Part of my role is to support the wellbeing and progress of all students and liaise with parents. To assist parents in knowing who they should contact regarding any concerns in the first instance, I have attached in this month's gazette a copy of our parent referral tree. It clearly outlines the contact person for any needs or concerns including serious issues, family matters, wellbeing concerns, learning concerns or classroom and work ethic concerns.

School Strategic Directions – 2020

As we move into the final year of our School Plan, staff will continue to actively contribute to and support the identified school projects and developed milestones through strategic teams and staff strategic direction meetings each term. The planned strategic direction meeting time is a great opportunity for the staff to collaborate in cross-faculty groups on key areas that will further enhance teaching and learning practice, wellbeing and everyday organisation and communication within the school community. The strategic teams continuing on from last year are:

- Literacy
- Growth Mindset
- Cross-Curricular Enrichment

We look forward to sharing the progress of our teams and feedback from our collaborative staff meetings with our school community throughout the year.

Assessment Policies, Booklets and Calendars

All students and parents will have access to the relevant Assessment Policy (which outlines the school's procedures in regards to assessment tasks), Assessment Booklet (providing an overview of each course and the assessment overview) and Assessment Calendar (providing specific dates for each class) through the Student and Parental Portal. The assessment calendar allows students to plan their time effectively, organise their study routine and establish quality practices when it comes to completing their school work. Assessment information is currently being finalised for Years 7-10 and will be uploaded in the coming 2 weeks. Assessment information for Years 11 and 12 is currently available. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure they familiarise themselves with all information outlined in the booklet. Students and parents of Years 7, 9 and 11 are to sign the acknowledgement slip at the back of the booklet and return it to Ms Abson - Deputy Principal for these year groups.

All assessment documentation will be available for students and parents on the Student and Parent Portal in the Resource section – Assessment Information.

High Potential Learners Program – Years 7-9

Last year we launched the Essential Skills Program for Year 7-9 which focused on equipping students with a range of key skills and mindsets that are needed in order to meet their full potential, engage and contribute successfully as global citizens, and thrive in a world of accelerating change.



Following feedback from the students and staff involved last year, as well as the development of the DoE's High Potential and Gifted Education Policy to be implemented in all schools in 2021, we have made some exciting changes to our program. I am excited to launch the revamped 'High Potential Learners Program for Years 7-9'. The aim of the program remains but now sees modifications to content and activities across the five mini program rotations. Students will develop their capacity to demonstrate and use the targeted skills, engage in discussions, collaborate with peers, participate in activities and engage with resources and strategies that can be used beyond the classroom and school life.

Students will rotate through lessons each term in the following focus areas:

- Literacy for High Potential
- Growing Your Mind
- Embracing the 4 C's
- Rethinking Challenges
- ME as a High Potential Learner

How does the High Potential learners Program work?

The High Potential Learners Program will take place on a Thursday morning during Period 1. SRE (Special Religious Education) occurs four times a term, also during Period 1. Students not doing SRE will be doing private study.

The program purpose, overview and schedule are available for students and parents on the Student and Parent Portal in the Resource section – Year 7-9 High Potential Learners Program.

Wellbeing Programs at SGGHS

The journey through high school can be a very different experience for each student and the Wellbeing Team is pivotal in providing essential support and guidance to all students. The vast Wellbeing programs that run each year are specifically designed and targeted for each cohort, cover a range of wellbeing areas and focus on building and maintaining positive mental health and wellbeing for our students. The fortnightly assembly schedule provides an opportunity for guest presenters and workshops as well as the opportunity for students to meet with their Year Advisors and Deputy Principal to discuss upcoming events, celebrate success and showcase the achievements of their peers.

Two key programs that run for Year 7 and Year 11 are the Year 7 Transition Program and Year 11 SEED Program, outlined below. A special thank you to the wellbeing team - Mrs Kaye Williamson (Head Teacher Wellbeing: Monday-Thursday) Mrs Jodie Jospe (Head Teacher Wellbeing: Friday and Year 11 Year Advisor), Mrs Danielle Galea (Year 7 Year Advisor), Mrs Nardene Dodd (Year 7 Assistant Year Advisor) and Ms Jenny Quah (Year 11 Assistant Advisor) for the planning and implementation of these quality programs to support the students.

Year 7 Transition Program

The Year 7 Transition Program supports a smooth transition into high school for all of our new Year 7 students. The program ran over 3 days and students rotated through a range of activities including peer support, positive friendships, cyber safety and healthy self. It was also a great opportunity to meet with parents at the end of the first week at the P&C BBQ and a big thank you to all parents who were able to join us for the afternoon and meet some of the staff.

Students will also be completing the *Best Start Program* as part of their transition in to High School. Best Start is an online program that assesses key literacy and numeracy skills of Year 7 students. The purpose of the Best Start Year 7 program is to provide feedback to teachers to help identify student needs and key information to support targeted teaching strategies that meet the learning needs of their students. Students will complete the online literacy and numeracy components during week 3.

Year 11 SEED Program

Supporting **E**ducational and **E**motional **D**evelopment

There is a strong commitment at St George Girls High School to creating quality learning experiences for all students through an environment that encourages and supports the development of healthy, happy, successful and productive individuals, while strengthening their cognitive, physical, social and emotional development.

The Year 11 **SEED Program** has been developed to support students as they transition into Stage 6. The program delivers targeted learning and opportunities for students around essential skills and knowledge required in the senior years to support continued growth academically, physically and mentally.

The **SEED Program** links directly to Strategic Direction 1 'Mindsets and Skills for Growth' and also supports the implementation of the following DoE policies:

- High Potential and Gifted Education Policy
- The Wellbeing Framework
- Mandatory Life Ready Program



Program Rationale

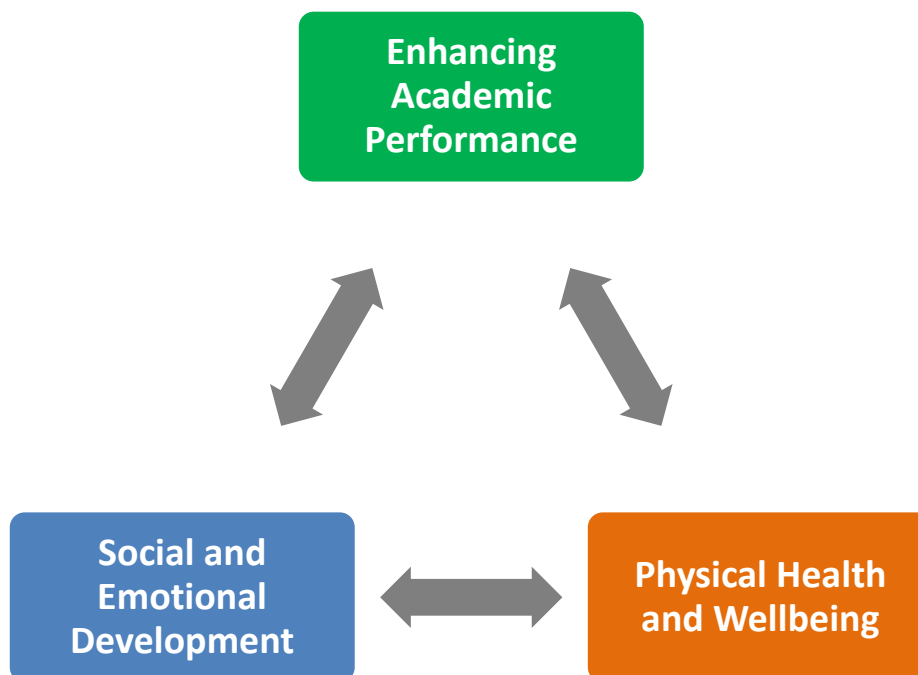
At St George Girls High School we implement evidence-based procedures, programs and practices that meet the learning and wellbeing needs of all high potential and gifted students and facilitate talent development.

Research indicates that:

- there are strong links between school excellence and wellbeing.
- teaching and learning, and the development of wellbeing, are parallel, integrated and complementary processes.
- wellbeing, or the lack of it, can affect a student's engagement and success in learning.
- wellbeing needs to be considered against a background of how we feel and function across several domains, recognising the multi-dimensional nature of wellbeing.
- supporting students to be active learners and developing strong character qualities will enable them to succeed, thrive and contribute positively throughout life.
- programs that develop resilience, motivation, effort, and perseverance assist in talent development.
- there needs to be provision of a range of opportunities to engage students and identify their learning interests.
- providing additional learning activities outside of class increases the breadth of learning.

- when they feel positive about their health, safety, wellbeing and future, young people are more likely to achieve better educational outcomes.
- the way in which young people plan for and respond to managing change and challenges can have a significant impact on their future.
- a learning environment where personal best, growth, high achievement and advanced learning are supported and celebrated enhances student engagement

The program focuses on the following three areas:



The **SEED Program** runs on a Monday afternoon, during periods 7 and 8, for Terms 1, 2 and 3. In Term 4, the first Monday afternoon session will be run by the Deputy Principal outlining assessment procedures and requirement for the HSC, key NESA information, careers information including scholarships and flexible leave entitlements for Year 12 students.

Students will participate in a range of workshops each term, many that have been planned to coincide with key events on the Year 11 calendar. Sessions will be conducted by both SGGHS staff and expert guest speakers. Any Year 11 parents/carers who require any further information about a session, please contact the Year Advisor.

The program purpose, overview and schedule are available for students and parents on the Student and Parent Portal in the Resource section – Year 11 SEED Program.

School Procedures

As the year starts we would like to remind parents of a few basic school procedures. Outlined below are some school procedures that we are currently asked about or regularly need to remind students about.

- All students are expected to be at school in full school uniform, including footwear. Appropriate footwear means covered, lace-up, polishable leather shoes and socks which cover the ankle. Jewellery is not to be worn except for earrings. Earrings are to be sleepers or studs not dangling earrings or large hooped earrings. Any student who is not in full school uniform must bring a note signed by a parent/carer and obtain a uniform pass from the Deputy Principal before school, or obtain a uniform infringement slip from the kiosk in the front office if they do not have a note.
- On mufti days Students are not to wear T shirts with inappropriate slogans (alcohol, drug references, offensive language), bare midriff tops, thongs or strappy shoes.
- Students are often required to leave their bags outside their classrooms. They should make sure they bring their valuables (e.g. wallets, phones) into class with them. Students are discouraged from bringing large amounts of money to school. If this is unavoidable, money can be left in the front office for safe keeping and picked up at the end of the day.

- Mobile phones are not to be used during class time, unless there is a specific educational purpose (e.g. voice recording) and the class teacher has given permission. Any student who continues to use their phone at these times will be reported to the Deputy Principal.
- Parents whose daughters are marked absent from roll call will receive a text message by 10:00am informing them of their daughter's absence. Replying to this text is sufficient as an explanation of absence – a paper note does not need to be submitted to the school as well. Please note that you can only reply to a specific message for a specific absence and you cannot reply to the same number more than once. If you know your daughter is absent from school and do not receive a text message, please contact the front office to let us know. We may need to update your mobile phone number on our records. Similarly if you receive a text when you think your daughter is at school, please contact the school so that we can clarify the situation and adjust our records.
- Students who feel sick during the day are to report to the front office so their condition can be assessed. If necessary the office will contact parents to let them know of their daughter's situation. Students are not to ring home themselves to make their own arrangements for being picked up from school.

At the first whole school assembly I went through a detailed outline of key school procedures with the students.

A copy of this presentation titled '2020 School Information and Procedures for Students' is available on the Student and Parent Portal in the Resource section. Support in ensuring all students follow the procedures outlined is greatly appreciated.

Online Study Skills

Our school subscribes to the ELES Study Skills Handbook. This is a great online resource for parents and students to address all their study skills issues and concerns as well as learn new ways to improve students' results at school. The handbook has a huge amount of information for both students and parents as well as lots of interactive activities, multimedia experiences and useful resources. Every month we will be posting a study skills tip for parents and students, so keep an eye out in the gazette for some great advice and strategies to support student learning.

Study Skills Tip For February

This month's study skills tip is **Top Tips For A New Year**. With the beginning of the new year, it's always a great time to reassess your academic approach. The key to making the most of this opportunity is focusing on the things which will bring the biggest return. Three simply but effective tips are outlined for students to try as they start the new year.

To access the handbook, go to www.studyskillshandbook.com.au and **login as a subscriber** with these details:

user name:

password:

Please note, the above user name and password is for the use of the parents and students AT OUR SCHOOL ONLY – please do not pass our school's details onto students or parents from other schools or other individuals or organisations as this is a prosecutable breach of copyright and also will result in frequent password changes for our school. Please also ensure you read through the terms of use the first time you access the handbook. We encourage all parents and students to take advantage of this opportunity to further develop their students' study skills abilities through this great online resource.

Parenting Ideas – A Resource to Support Parents Through the High School Years

Our school subscribes to *Parenting Ideas* as a way to support our school community in successfully navigating the many challenges that may present throughout the high school years. The website is a comprehensive online learning centre to support parents and teacher professional learning, and provides a wealth of information, content and practical resources to help us support and develop strong family-school relationships. Available resources include:

- a monthly newsletter for parents
- articles that relate to topics such as parenting girls, resilience, technology and parenting, wellbeing and mental health.
- webinars and videos for parents and staff
- teacher professional learning resources

Each month in the Gazette will be a focus article from the resource 'Insights' to support parents in a range of key areas that often impact on student wellbeing and learning. Parents will also be informed of any webinars and parent courses as they become available. This month we are highlighting two articles from 'Insights':

1. Making a smooth transition to secondary school

Going to secondary school is both exciting and scary for many kids. There's excitement about new friends, teachers and ventures, but this can be overshadowed by anxiety and stress. This article shares some ideas to aid a smooth transition.

2. Five forgotten skills that contribute to student success

Amongst a continuing focus on literacy and numeracy levels, the take up of STEM subjects and other academic areas, it's still important to cover skill areas such as relationship, optimism and coping. Here are five skills to support student learning in all academic areas

I am looking forward to another year full of exciting programs and opportunities for our students, attending the many outstanding school events and showcase evenings and working alongside the staff, student and parents of St George Girls High School.

Ms Pamela Abson
Deputy Principal – Teaching and Learning

Mathematics Faculty News

The Mathematics faculty welcomes all students to a new school year and particularly to Year 7. This year we challenge you to set high expectations for your mathematics and to strive for them. We will aim to build your skills further to meet these expectations.

HSC Results 2019

The Year 12 Mathematics students achieved some outstanding HSC results in 2019.

A special congratulations goes out to Maya Vasic who was placed 13th in the State in Mathematics. Her teacher Ms Chand (along with the rest of the Maths staff) are very proud with that wonderful news.

I look forward to seeing terrific results from this year's Year 12 students, particularly as the new stage 6 Calculus courses will be examined for the first time in the HSC.

Some Tips for success for all students!!

- Start 'planting the seed' early on in the school term with a good schedule at home that should include: a good homework routine, a good time for bed and of course the **responsible use of electronic devices, which includes when and where** the electronic devices will be turned off for the night.
- **Separate homework time from screen time.** This allows for better concentration and focus on the concepts and questions when attempting them.
- Always allow 20 minutes at the start of the week to plan your homework/study routine for that week.

Homework routine?

- Homework is an important process to master concepts and content in Mathematics.
- Homework is usually given at the end of each lesson.
- When completing homework tasks it is important to show working (where necessary), mark the work and resolve any errors.
- If students are having difficulty understanding a concept or a particular problem, then they should:
 - seek assistance from the teacher
 - review the notes and examples in class or
 - attend the Mathematics Homework centre

Mathematics Homework Centre

The Mathematics Homework Centre has been running for 4 years and it is on again this year. This year the Centre will be open on **Wednesday's** instead of Thursday's between 3:30pm and 5pm and it is held in the Library. Students have a chance to request specialised help from talented mathematicians and tutors, while also making a head-start on their homework. If you're not already taking advantage of this excellent and targeted assistance, please collect a permission form from the Mathematics staffroom. We are grateful to the P&C and Mothers' Committee for their continued support of this program.

Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA)

A big welcome back to 2020 to all students and parents from the CAPA faculty and a very special welcome to our new Year 7 students who we are greatly looking forward to getting to know better as the year progresses. We are also looking forward to a great year, filled with creativity, critical thinking and collaboration; a year filled with wonderful musical and drama performances, art exhibitions, incredible excursion opportunities, and of course, exciting and productive classes that have already begun.



2019 was another dynamic and eventful year for our faculty and the quality and substance of CAPA student work was outstanding. Our CAPA students of 2019 all performed brilliantly in the HSC, with results well above state average in all courses. 100% of our students were awarded the top 2 bands.

Once again, **HSC performances and Major Works from all three subject areas of Drama, Music and Visual Arts were nominated for the NESA Showcases, OnStage, Encore and ArtExpress, highlighting the exceptional standard of work that our students attain.**

We are always extremely proud of all of our students and the way that they approach their CAPA studies and particularly how they maturely seek feedback from their teachers to improve on their work. It is this that really sets our students apart as they can use this feedback to refine and develop their works to a high level. In CAPA subjects, students learn to 'think outside the box', to develop their creative thought and to apply their knowledge of the world around them. Self-expression is crucial to student engagement across any school. It is important that our students take creative risks and be brave in stepping outside of their comfort zones. This is especially important in the junior years so that can take on their senior studies with a more innovative and creative mindset and with a greater ability to conceptualise and analyse their work. Students can definitely learn how to take a more creative approach to their work and learning and CAPA subjects can reinforce this important skill, while building resilience and confidence. Students can also apply these creative and critical thinking skills to their other subjects.

Creativity will be the currency of the 21st Century

Gerald Gordon, Ph.D., President/CEO, Fairfax Economic Development Authority

In CAPA in 2020, students will be challenged to engage with their world creatively, to look at ideas from various perspectives and to think critically about world issues and events. They will be encouraged to communicate their ideas and express their point of view. This will help our high potential learners to develop a deeper understanding and make greater sense and meaning, as they shape their own responses to the world around them. Global corporations and tertiary institutions want their students and employees to be imaginative, innovative and effective communicators. Walk into any Drama, Music or Visual Arts classroom and these are the skills that our students are learning. As well as studying a rich array of subject specific styles, forms and mediums, students are encouraged to bring what they are learning in all other subject areas into the classroom so, importantly, students connect their learning and they are always highly engaged. In CAPA subjects, students will build confidence in expressing their understanding, views, thoughts and ideas to a wider audience. In CAPA we are passionate about empowering our students to develop these necessary life skills that they can take into their future and enabling them on their path to happiness and success. This is our goal for 2020 and beyond.

Lisa Wright
Head Teacher CAPA

Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA)



Green Corner



Unfortunately, the 2019-2020 summer holidays has been quite disastrous for the Australian environment with unprecedented bushfires, that still continue to this day, having devastated most of the south east. One of the most concerning environmental problems that arose out of this disaster is the shocking number of native wildlife casualties numbering well over a billion, which has endangered and plunged many endemic species into potential extinction.

To support relief and rehabilitation efforts for these affected species, which includes koalas, the Enviro Council will be holding a fundraiser during Week 4 that includes selling reusable straws, succulents and other plants, and other activities to be held during recess and lunch. All money raised will be going towards WIRES, so I'd encourage everyone to donate!



Paper recycling, worm farm and **gardening** teams will begin soon (check announcements). New students are very much needed and welcome!

Clean Up Australia Day and **Earth Hour** will also be held later in the term.

I look forward to another year of working towards better environmental sustainability in our school community, the many events and initiatives the Enviro Council will plan and hold, and working with new people that hopefully share the same passion regarding the environment.

Anne Chen
Enviro Council Vice President
& Enviro Journalist

Languages

Languages have had another exiting year in 2019. We've started implementing the new Junior syllabus in Years 7 and 9 for French and Japanese and the new course prescriptions for Japanese Extension. During the course of the year students have engaged in many stimulating and creative activities in their classes with their teachers and had the opportunity to participate in a number of excursions across the three languages. With the highlight being a study tour to Japan.

This year teachers will continue to implement the new syllabi and develop programs to engage our talented students. Of course we have a variety of excursions planned for this year as well. The first will be the Japanese High School visit in May followed by Latin Camp, the Japanese Tanken Centre Excursion and the Little Snail restaurant excursion.

HSC Results 2019

Throughout the year, our students have been nurtured by their Languages teachers, which in turn has led to some outstanding results. The consistent feedback and quality teaching students receive not only in Year 12 but throughout their journey of language learning at St George Girls equips the students with the necessary skills and exam techniques to excel in their chosen language. Of course, one cannot dismiss the tireless effort of the students themselves. In 2019, 86% of students in Japanese Continuers achieved a band 6 compared to 28% in the state and 100% of students in Japanese Extension achieved a band E4 compared to 46% of the state. 100% of students achieved a band 5 or 6 compared to 89% in the state and 100% of Latin Extension students achieved a band E3 or E4 compared to 100% in the state. 67% of student achieved a band 5 or 6 in French. These are outstanding results of which the school community can be very proud.



Special congratulations go to Maya Vasic who was placed first in the state in Latin Continuers and her teacher Ms Lilian Thai.

Languages Interns from the University of Sydney

For the first 7 weeks of Term 4 last year, French students in Years 8, 9 and 10 were taught by an Intern from University of Sydney, Ms Kaylene Zhang and Japanese students in Years 8, 10 and 12 were taught by Ms Thuy Tran. They developed her own units of work for each class according to the school's programs with a particular focus on task-based activities and ICT skills. We thank them for the time they spent preparing motivating and engaging lessons for the students during their Internship. Ms Zhang has successfully secured a teaching position at Oakhill College for 2020.

Latin

Year 10 Latin students ended 2019 with a study of Catullus' love poetry. They not only translated a more complex form of Latin than what they'd seen before but dived into analysing the art and philosophy of love. Despite the class' cynicism towards the topic of romance, Year 10 gave engaging and entertaining presentations comparing Catullus' poems to songs and films of the 21st century, proving that ideas echo across human history. As this year's Year 11 they are continuing their exploration of new Roman authors, including Ovid, Virgil, and Cicero.

French

During Term 4, the Year 10 French class enjoyed a celebration of French food. Students brought in delicious food with a French flavour, such as *croissants*, *pains au chocolat*, *mousse au chocolat*, French cheeses and crackers, *baguette* and *crêpes*. This was followed by the viewing of the film ***Belle et la Bête*** (the French version of Beauty and the Beast).



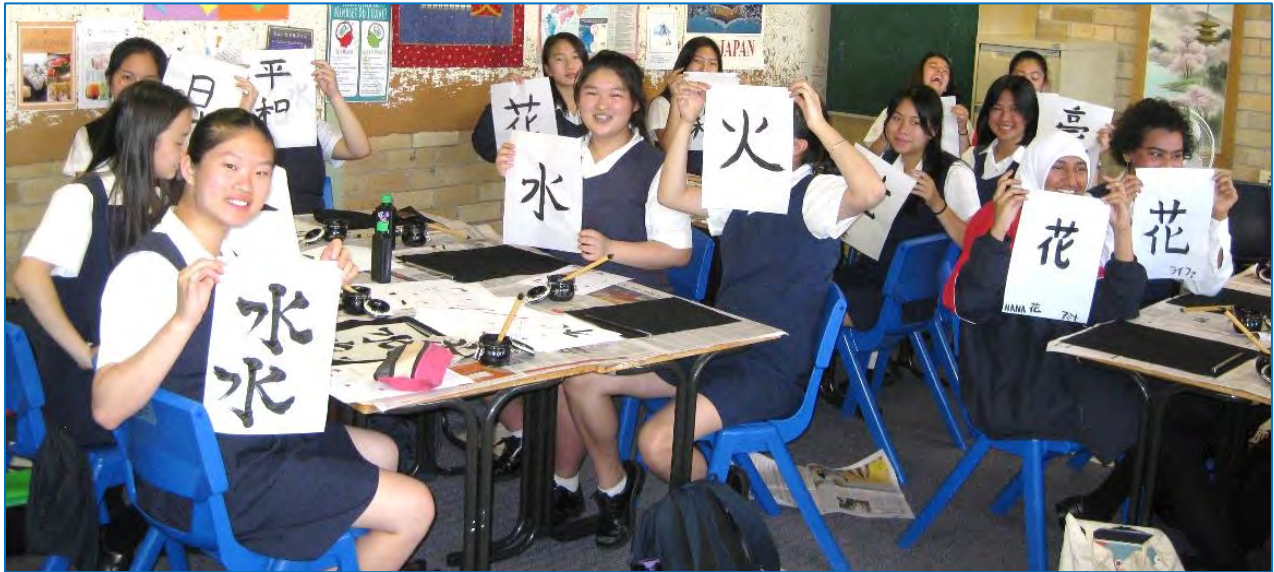
In 2019 Years 9, 10 and 11 French students received issues of the teen magazines ***Allons-y!*** (Year 9), ***Bonjour*** (Year 10) and ***Ça va?*** (Year 11) throughout the year and the students enjoyed reading the interesting and varied articles in their magazines. In 2020 the students will again enjoy a subscription to these magazines.

The students in Years 8-10 French also subscribed to the online learning site Language Perfect (Education Perfect) which assisted them very much with their pronunciation and the learning of the vocabulary and grammar covered in class. We will be again subscribing to this great online resource in 2020.

Japanese

Year 9 Japanese Calligraphy Incursion

Year 9 Japanese students enjoyed a calligraphy workshop presented by some representatives from the Japanese embassy on Tuesday 19 November. They learnt about the origins of Japanese calligraphy and the specific techniques used when practising calligraphy. The students had fun trying their hand at using traditional calligraphy tools to create some really beautiful kanji (Japanese characters). Well done Year 9!



Year 10 Japanese Excursion in Term 4 2019

On 27 November the Year 10 Japanese class enjoyed a day in the city experiencing all things Japanese. They first went to the Japan Foundation in Central Park. The students participated in a Japanese cultural workshop in which they learnt about *taiko*, how to learn Japanese through rhythm using Japanese drums. They also learnt about the art of *furoshiki* (Japanese style cloth wrapping) and the culture of gift giving in Japan.

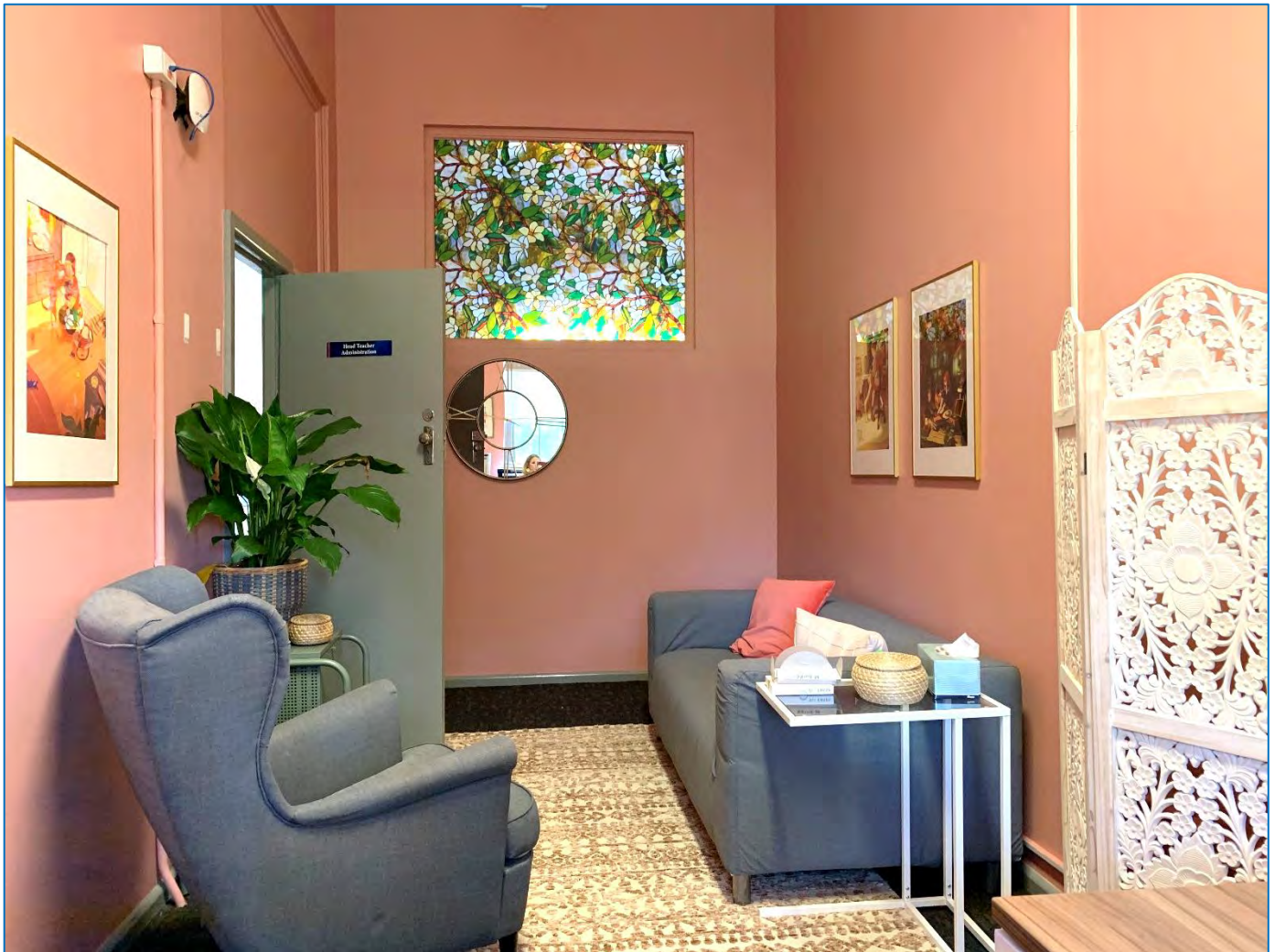
After the Japan Foundation, the class visited *Daiso* which is a very popular Japanese variety store. We then walked into the city where we had a wonderful Japanese BBQ style lunch at a restaurant called *Ichiban Teppanyaki*. Here the girls not only had the chance to sample some Japanese food, they also enjoyed trying to catch raw eggs, rice and other things that the chefs were “throwing” them. The girls had a lot of fun at this restaurant and many said it was the highlight of the day.

After lunch, we walked to The Galleries on George Street where we visited the famous Japanese bookshop called *Kinokuniya*. The students enjoyed perusing the huge range of *manga* (Japanese comic books), Japanese books and stationery available there. Overall, the Year 10 Japanese class really enjoyed being immersed in Japanese language and culture for the whole day.



School Counsellor

Last year, we applied for a Youth Friendly Room grant and we were successful. This funding has allowed us to create a brand new counsellor space in line with the recommendations about what young people wanted in a counsellor space. The resulting space, which is in a new location opposite room 7, is a cosy welcoming space which is receiving excellent feedback from students and staff. Students can access school counselling support from Ms Batten on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays and from Ms McAlpine on Thursdays and odd week Fridays. We look forward to a productive year supporting our students.



Parents and Citizens' Association

Welcome to the new 2020 school year. We hope that all new students are settling in. We held the Welcome Year 7 BBQ last Friday to warmly welcome our new Year 7 students. Thank you to our helpers on the day.

A reminder we now have the 2020 digital Sydney Entertainment Book for sale. You will receive instant access to the Entertainment digital Membership app that allows you to redeem great offers directly from your Iphone or Android and guaranteed will pay for itself through all the great discounts on offer. Purchase the new 12 month digital memberships at our payment page here

<https://www.entertainmentbook.com.au/orderbooks/203j324>

The P&C committee meets every 4th Thursday of the month during school terms. Our next P&C meeting for the year will be held on Thursday 27 February 2020 in the staff common room at 7.00pm (until ~8.30pm). Everyone is welcome to attend. The P&C looks forward to connecting with all parents, including our new parents at these meetings throughout the year to support our girls education.

Sharon Khan
President

Mothers' Committee

Welcome back to all our parents and a warm welcome to parents of our new students. We have just had our first meeting for the year. Thanks to Ms Romeo and Ms Abson for providing a overview and introduction to the new school year, including information about the new and exciting programs that will be operational in 2020.

The Mothers' Committee holds meetings on the first Wednesday of every month during the school terms from 10 am to 12 noon. It's a great opportunity to get to know other parents as well as to find out what's going on at school. Please feel free to attend even if you cannot stay for the whole meeting.

At the next meeting, we will be working on plans for the Mother Daughter dinner. This is an evening event held annually in May/June and is organised by the Mothers' Committee with the help of our prefects. It's always a great night and you'll receive more information about it in the coming months.

Next Meeting: Wednesday 4 March at 10am in the School Library.

Uniform Shop News

Polo tops (Sport): Unfortunately, due to a supplier issue, we ran out of stock in some sizes. We have arranged for a different supplier and hope to have all sizes available soon.

The Uniform Shop is open every Wednesday during the school term from 1pm – 3:30pm, and additional days at times of peak demand such as the beginning and end of the year. We need parent volunteers to help at the Uniform Shop on Wednesdays from 12:45pm – 2pm. If you would like to volunteer some time on a Wednesday, please contact Cathy.

Best wishes,

Edwina

Edwina Murphy
President, Mothers' Committee
Contact Ph: 0409 413 218

Cathy Anderson
Vice President / Uniform Shop Coordinator
Contact Ph: 0423 533 855

St Georgians

Welcome back! The St Georgians hope 2020 will be a happy and successful year for all. We congratulate Year 12, 2019 on their fantastic HSC results and look forward to the HSC 2019 Excellence Ceremony. The St Georgians are proud to be able to contribute towards the awards presented at this event.

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. The cost of Life Membership is a one off payment of \$30.00. To join, please download the membership Form from the school website – you will find our page under the “Parents and Community Groups” tag.

We have been busily preparing once again for our Annual Reunion Luncheon, open to all ex-students and staff of St GGHS. This year we will meet on Saturday 2 May at St George Leagues Club, Kogarah.

The St Georgians generally meet on the fourth Thursday of each month, in the Bistro area at St George Leagues Club, Kogarah. For details of our next meeting, please email us. We have a great group of ladies of all ages, and it's a fun, relaxed atmosphere. We also invite you to stay after the meeting for a little socialising and perhaps lunch in the Bistro. We are always keen to meet new members, and look forward to seeing you there!

TheStGeorgians@hotmail.com

Kim Archibald
President



Coming Events

Tuesday 11 February	Gazette issued on school website and emailed to parents and students Students Dismissed 2.25pm
Wednesday 12 February	Swimming Carnival, Bexley Pool
Thursday 13 February	Years 9 – 12 'OnStage' Excursion, Seymour Centre, 11am – 4pm
Monday 17 February	Volleyball Knockout Tournament, Menai
Tuesday 18 February	Students Dismissed 2:25pm
Wednesday 19 February	Year 7 Turning Point Presentation Year 9 Peer Support Leaders, Turning Point Presentation
Thursday 20 February	WIRES Fundraising Activities
Friday 21 February	Year 11 Geography Field Trip, Como, 9am – 2:45pm
Monday 24 February – Wednesday 26 February	Year 7 Camp
Tuesday 25 February	Students Dismissed 2.25pm
Wednesday 26 February	Year 9 Food Technology Excursion, Royal Botanical Gardens, 8:40am
Thursday 27 February	HSC Excellence Assembly, 10.55am Parents and Citizens' Association Meeting, Staff Common Room, 7pm
Friday 28 February	Zone Swimming Carnival
Saturday 29 February	Year 12 Japanese Extension Workshop, 8:30am – 1:30pm, Wenona School
Monday 2 March	Zone Swimming Carnival Year 10 UTS Presentation Year 12 UTS Presentation
Tuesday 3 March	'In Concert' Rehearsal Students Dismissed 2.25pm
Wednesday 4 March	School Photo Day Mothers' Committee Meeting, 10am Voyage of Musical Discovery Excursion, 6:30pm
Thursday 5 March	Dragon Pride Day
Friday 6 March	School Photo Catch-up Day
Monday 9 March – Friday 20 March	Year 12 Assessments

It is important that payment for excursions is made to the Finance Office or Online prior to the due date.

Photo envelopes must be given to photographers on the day with exact payment!

ST GEORGE GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL

SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS WILL BE TAKEN ON: **WEDNESDAY 4TH MARCH 2020**

COMPLETE ONLINE ORDERING BEFORE 4TH MARCH

Dear Parents,

School photographs are scheduled to be taken by advancedlife Photography. Whilst an envelope and flyer will be distributed shortly, if possible it is our preference that ordering be completed online to reduce administration and potential security issues related to the return of cash and envelopes on photo day.

Orders for packages and sibling photographs can be placed securely online at **www.advancedlife.com.au** using our school's unique **9 digit Online Order Code**. Portrait and group package orders are due by photography day.

Should you wish to purchase a sibling photograph online, the order must be placed no later than the day before photography day. Sibling photographs will only be taken if an order has been placed.

Should you have any queries concerning school photographs or online ordering, please direct them via email to enquiries@advancedlife.com.au



ORDER NOW

WWW.ADVANCEDLIFE.COM.AU

9 Digit Online Order Code
VRY 8QW ZG6

advancedlife
photography & print specialists

STUDY SKILLS TIP FOR FEBRUARY

Top Tips For A New Year

With the beginning of the new year, it's always a great time to reassess your academic approach. The key to making the most of this opportunity is focusing on the things which will bring the biggest return.

1. Simplify Your Organization System

Every student has an organization system. True, the definition of "organization" may be looser for some students than others, but everyone has a way they stay organized (or attempt to).

Maybe you're the "Type-A" student and you have a clearly defined system. You'll know that you're "Type-A" by the file folders you both own and use, the folded socks in your drawer, and all the lists by which you keep track of important information. You probably have a calendar, a planner, and you know exactly which clothing is clean and which is dirty.

But not everyone fits in such a naturally organized world. These students can be called "Type-B." If you're a "Type-B" student, you're not alone, but organization probably requires more effort. "Type-B" students tend to prefer "piling systems" to filing cabinets. Calendars often seem like too much work, so they'd rather just put everything in their backpacks and find it later. Students on the far end of the "Type-B" universe may even find themselves sorting laundry via the "smell check" method.



Regardless of whether you are a Type A or B student, though, one of the biggest difference-makers this year is your organization system. Few things will save time and improve academic performance the way an effective organization system will.

A great organization system has at its centre one goal: replace your brain.

The more organized you are, the less you have to think. Your organization system should be simple enough that

you don't have to make any decisions about where you put new assignments, where to find completed assignments, or what to do with graded assignments. You shouldn't have to go through a mental checklist every time you study because your organization system does it for you.

The fewer decisions you need to make, the more your thoughts and energy can focus on things that matter. Consider these four questions to determine how simple your organization system is right now:

- Do you have good systems in place to manage and organize both the paper and digital resources for school?
- Do you have a system to make sure that all assignments and due dates are marked on your calendar / planner?
- Do you have a system to focus on what needs to be done today and not just what's due tomorrow?

When you can answer each of these four questions without thinking, you'll know that your organization system is simple enough to be a major asset this year.

2. Break the "Cram Cycle" Before it Starts

By the end of the semester, students often find themselves overloaded and overwhelmed, having to rely on cramming for final exams to get through to the break. They are exhausted and in survival mode. Thriving academically no longer matters. All that matters is the break at the end.

If you've ever felt this way, you've experienced what we call the "Cram Cycle." Students get busy during the semester, which leads to exhaustion. When you're exhausted, the only thing you want

to do is zone out for a bit. After an afternoon of zoning, students are forced to put all their effort into completing assignments that are due tomorrow. We call this “cramming.” As students work on only that which is due tomorrow, long-term assignments pile up and create even more busyness, which leads to exhaustion, and the “Cram Cycle” begins to accelerate.

Most students only get out of the “Cram Cycle” when the semester ends.

But this year can be different. If you want to stay out of this dreaded cycle, commit yourself to doing some independent learning at least five days a week, even when you don’t have anything due the next day. Use every day as a review day, spreading out your study sessions for big tests and projects across multiple days instead of letting them pile up. This approach takes more effort initially to create these habits, but you’ll reap the benefits when you’re free of the “Cram Cycle” and the stress that follows it come finals season.



3. Supercharge Retention with Scientifically-verified Study Strategies

Everyone knows that taking notes is a good idea. Reading your textbooks seem like a great thing to do. And you’ve probably learned that it’s best to have a consistent place to study, one which is quiet, clean, and comfortable enough (but not TOO comfortable).

But what are the strategies that have been scientifically-verified to boost your retention?

One of the best things you can do is to take a break in the middle of your study sessions. In one study psychologists wanted to find out whether there was any difference in “spacing” a study session (this means to take a break in the middle) or “massing” instead (which means that you hammer it out all at once).

The researchers took two randomly-chosen, equal groups of students, gave them the same amount of study time, gave them the same material, and tested them on the material afterward. The only difference was that one group took a short break in the middle and the other group didn’t. The results were incredible.

The group that studied with “spacing” did 50% better than the group that studied with “massing.” That means in the same amount of study time, you could potentially boost your retention by 50% by just taking a ten-minute break.

Our school’s subscription details to www.studyskillshandbook.com.au are -

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INSIGHTS

Five forgotten skill sets that contribute to student success



At a time when we hear a great deal about growth mindsets, good mental health habits and creating digitally savvy students, we can easily overlook the skill sets that form the building blocks of long-term school success. These are skill sets that are also easily forgotten when we narrow our focus onto numeracy, literacy, performing arts, STEM and other academic areas.

While all these other mental skills and academic areas are important, the skills I want to focus on here are ones that can be taught, or at the very least drawn out, alongside every other skill when we as parents and teachers know what to look for.

Following are five skill sets that contribute massively to overall student success and contentedness at school.



1. Friendship skills

The ability to get along with others is hugely important for children and teenagers. Those students with a strong set of friendship skills are easy to like, easy to relate to and easy to play with. The skills they possess include knowing how to win and lose well, how to approach others to join in a group and how to lead rather than boss.

2. Organisational skills

The ability to organise your time, your space, your items and other aspects of your life is a massive plus for any student. The best way to help children who are organisationally challenged is to introduce them to systems and processes to help them organise themselves. These processes include the use of visual reminders, anchoring (i.e. linking new behaviours to habitual behaviours) and the mapping out of activities.

3. Optimism skills

It may seem strange to see optimism as skill set, but as leading psychologist Professor Martin Seligman discovered through his research, optimism can be taught. Seligman found that while some children are more inclined by nature to see a glass as half empty than half full, all children are capable of developing an optimistic explanatory style through exposure and direct teaching. The skills of optimism include being aware of self-talk, reframing negative events into positive events and the practice of perspective-taking.



4. Coping skills

Kids will generally face a number of challenges during the course of their school lives including overcoming the disappointment of not being picked on a team, working their way through difficult learning situations and dealing with rejection. The impact of these challenges will depend on each kid's own spirit, the support they receive and their coping skills. The good news is that coping skills can be taught or, at the very least, encouraged if adults know what to focus on. Coping strategies include parking problems for a while, normalising difficult situations and accepting and moving on. Some kids will use coping strategies quite naturally, while others need parental and teacher input to help them cope with even seemingly minor challenges.

5. Relaxation skills

The ability to relax and get away from it all is vital for the maintenance of mental health, which in turn affects a student's ability to perform. Many of today's kids live with pressure. That pressure needs to be released through relaxation and play, otherwise it can lead to anxiety and other mental illnesses. The ability to relax and unwind is paramount to your child's school success. Relaxation techniques include mindfulness and meditation, participating in hobbies and enjoying creative pursuits.

These skills are part developmental and part environmental. That is, kids will naturally develop many of them as they mature but the skills also need to be nurtured environmentally. They need to be recognised, encouraged, taught and modelled by adults who children and teenagers respect and admire. That makes parents and teachers 'Very Important People' in the process of acquiring them.



Michael Grose

Michael Grose, founder of Parenting Ideas, is one of Australia's leading parenting educators. He's an award-winning speaker and the author of 12 books for parents including *Spoonfed Generation*, and the bestselling *Why First Borns Rule the World and Last Borns Want to Change It*. Michael is a former teacher with 15 years experience, and has 30 years experience in parenting education. He also holds a Master of Educational Studies from Monash University specialising in parenting education.

INSIGHTS

Making a smooth transition to secondary school



Going to secondary school is both exciting and scary for many kids. There's excitement about new friends, teachers and ventures, but this can be overshadowed by anxiety and stress.

The sheer size of a high school building can be overwhelming to the uninitiated. The potential loss of status when moving from big fish in a small pond to tiny minnow in a large ocean can be hard to swallow for some. Add the increased number of teachers and the hormonal changes that accompany puberty and drive emotional and cognitive development and it is little wonder the first year of secondary school often sees a plateauing in learning. Most kids are flat out making new friends and getting used to how secondary school works, so learning takes a back seat for a time.

While it's easier for those who have a brother or sister already there who can pass on some tips about how to survive secondary school, many don't have that luxury. Fortunately, there are number of strategies parents can use to make the transition to secondary school easier.

Know the school space

Familiarity helps reduce anxiety. Most secondary schools have familiarisation programs for incoming students but it helps to reinforce with your young person where the key spaces are – such as administration, toilets, the tuck shop and drinking taps. A trip to the school during the holidays, if possible, can help reassure a nervous secondary school starter.

Make the leap with friends

Negotiating new friendships can be stressful so it helps to identify some friends from primary school or outside school that your child can travel with or meet up before school, at lunch breaks and during times when classes aren't scheduled. This will give them the opportunity to share and compare experiences, which is therapeutic for kids who are experiencing change.

Help with planning and organisation

Some students can be overwhelmed by the organisational demands of secondary school. If your child fits this category, be prepared to be on hand to coach your young person in the finer arts of being on time to class, organising work in folders, planning homework time, handing in multiple assignments and filling out forms.

Set up a designated study space in the home

Now that your young person has hit the big time it's important that they have a study space to call their own. Keep this outside the bedroom if possible – the bedroom is a space for sleeping and relaxing. Use any area that is reasonably quiet and well lit. Set up a desk with a computer, if possible, along with stationery items.

Establish a work schedule

If your child's primary school homework was given inconsistently then be prepared for a change. Most secondary schools try to coordinate homework between different teachers but there will be more times than not when your child will come home with multiple homework assignments to complete. Build the homework habit early and choose a regular time that allows for breaks. Encourage them to work quickly so that work does not drag on and become demotivating.

Stay patient and positive

The social and academic demands of going to secondary school can be mentally draining for young people. Some will miss old friends and the relative comfort of primary school. It's important for parents to be patient with their young person, to expect a few behaviour blowouts and to be prepared to listen and help them process their new experiences. If your young person has negative experiences, point them in the direction of the good things that may happen during the day.

Your young person's coping mechanisms are being tested during this time. They can change on a daily basis. If stress becomes overwhelming or persistent to the point that they don't want to go to school after the initial settling-in period, consider organising some extra assistance. A year-level coordinator, school counsellor or the local doctor can be good starting points should extra assistance be needed.

Starting secondary school is one of many transitions your young person will face in life. With planning and support, your child can make a positive start to secondary school and enjoy an amazing time at their new school.



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