

Lights Out

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AUSTRALIAN
BOARDING
SCHOOLS
ASSOCIATION
CREATING THE FUTURE FOR BOARDING SCHOOLS





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ON THE COVER

The primary school-aged boarders from The King's School, Tudor House enjoy a wide range of off-site activities each weekend of the school year.

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Why We Need to Celebrate our Profession

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Boarding staff are a special breed! For so much of your time your focus is on other people, and you play such a critical role looking after other people's children. You walk the floor in the boarding house, stop to chat, help with homework, encourage the boarders to give things a go, teach them about sensible technology use, help with tough decisions, ensure you know where they are, eat your meals with them and hopefully get them enough sleep - just to name a few of the daily chores.

But isn't it a challenge to explain to those not in our industry just what you do? No-one really understands the demands you actually face, the time pressures you are under, and the challenges you come across. Imagine describing to a stranger the extra workload the coronavirus has meant to so many of our schools. One Head of Boarding recently said to me - "I thought I was pretty good at handling stress, but this coronavirus nearly broke me". And all of this happened on top of the induction of new students, the homesickness, the new staff, and all the other administrative tasks which can dominate the work day.

So this year, we in ABSA are working extra hard to help others understand just how important your work is for our society. We are working to get our profession recognised, not only by those who are doing the work, but by all those who are affected by it - and those who aren't. The focus of all our media contacts for the year will be about the professionalisation of the industry - no longer is the boarding staff member just a teacher who wanted a free house to live in, or a person who thought it might be a good job for a while - the boarding staff member of today is a professional, trained in their important work, continually looking for professional learning opportunities, and who is working toward not only having an excellent standard of boarding provision in the school but also becoming accredited themselves.



ABSA will launch the Certification Scheme for Boarding Schools, using AS5725-2015, the Boarding Standard for Australian Schools and Residences, in coming months and believe it will be critical to see all of our schools become certified against this standard. The Accredited Boarding Practitioner Scheme, jointly developed with the UK Boarding Schools Association, is growing steadily, giving staff a real opportunity to celebrate their professional standing within the industry. National Boarding Week from 17 to 23 May will help schools to focus on what makes their boarding school programs special. The ABSA Training Academy will soon launch, offering base level training (as we do at present), and further options including on-line courses and specified workshops, right up to a Masters in conjunction with Buckingham University in the UK - again sharing in the good work of our sister organisation in the UK. And we are working on a complete re-write and re-design of the Duty of Care Certificate Course to launch in 2021.

So how can you be involved? Get along to the many and varied activities ABSA is running across Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and shortly in Malaysia. Our aim is to provide a wide range of activities to suit every level of staff - from 'A Look Inside' where you get to see how others run their boarding program, to 'nuts-and-bolts' sessions for those at the coalface, from user workshops in boarding software to boarding-specialised Youth Mental Health First Aid qualifications, from First-Aid training which is targeted to boarding schools to personalised workshops run by ABSA personnel to address those issues faced in your specific school. And of course if you haven't undertaken the Duty of Care Certificate Course during the last four years your qualification is out-of-date - time to come along again!

Let's all work together to get our professional recognised, not only in our schools but by the wider community as a whole. The work everyone in this sector does is exceptional - keep it up!





Leadership After Failure

Recovery and Redemption after Making a Mess

AUTHOR

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Conference workshops, educational publications, and faculty handbooks are replete with inspirational advice on exactly how to get it right. *This* is how to lead a group. *This* is how to discipline children. *This* is how to teach stellar classes. *This* is how to be a boarding maven. *This* is how to make a difference. And well beyond the narrow confines of the boarding school world lie inspirational biographies, films, and legends of people who are famous for not only getting it right, but getting it right under adverse circumstances.

What's missing is some guidance on how to mess everything up. More accurately, what's missing is practical advice on how to lead after making a mistake. If you want to learn how to get it right, then keep reading mainstream publications on youth development and leadership. If you think you might make a mistake this term and you want to prepare for recovery, then read on.

I often begin a segment of a live workshop by asking the group, "Who thinks they'll make a mistake this academic year? Please raise your hand." A few brave souls raise their hands, then a few more, gingerly. If I stand there for twenty seconds, eventually everyone has his or her hand in the air. The last few people to raise their hands do a lot of checking first. They look around to be sure everyone else's hand is up before raising their own hands. This group admission, rich with social referencing, happens gradually because it's not socially acceptable to fail. And yet we all do.

How is it that a pervasive event—making mistakes—is so difficult to declare? In part, it's because leadership after a mistake is so tough, bruised pride and all. To avoid considering those challenges, it can be easier to dismiss the notion that mistakes are universal. *Not me. Right.*

For most faculty and staff, it's a relief to begin the year agreeing that no one is perfect; that all employees, at all levels, share a willingness to learn; and that boarding school is an environment where leaders support their colleagues' professional development. Simply recognising those tenets of healthy organisational culture will go a long way toward your willingness to lead effectively after making a mistake.



What exactly is a mistake? The answer isn't as obvious as you may think. Table 1 helps to clarify some of the distinctions between, say, a poor choice and a mistake. Take the boarding staff member who returns to school intoxicated after time off. If caught, he or she is likely to tell a Housemaster or Housemistress, "I made a mistake." Actually, what that person did was to make a Poor Choice. It's not as if that staff member didn't know the rules or tried hard not to drink. In that case, drinking would truly have been a Mistake. But in almost all cases, it represents a Poor Choice.

The distinctions in Table 1 are important because each has different implications for the type of leadership required. Column four is left intentionally blank to prompt your active learning. Take a moment right now and write in examples from your own life, either that you've done or witnessed. That exercise will give you the best understanding of what a Mistake is.

Now that you've completed Table 1, consider what the best leaders do.

1. The best leaders are **aware** of their strengths and weaknesses. They understand their skill set and the limitations of what they can do. By continually evaluating the demands of a situation and their ability to handle it, the best leaders usually avoid Lucky Breaks, Mistakes, and Neglect. Great leaders take risks, of course, but they show restraint by not acting way outside their domains of competence. The best leaders know when to consult, ask for help, and say no.

2. The best leaders put forth great **effort**. By practicing healthy self-care—exercising, getting rest, eating healthy food, and maintaining good social supports—the best leaders are able to try their hardest almost all the time. This helps them maximize their Success experiences and minimize Neglect.

Table 1

Leader's Knowledge	Leader's Actions	Category of Action	Create an Example	Next Steps
Leader <i>basically</i> knows the right thing to do	Does the right thing	Success		Be modest, embrace next challenge, keep learning and teach others.
Leader <i>basically</i> knows the right thing to do	Tries hard, but fails	Accident		Reflect, apologise, make amends, and build relevant skills.
Leader <i>basically</i> knows the right thing to do	Intentionally does a wrong thing	Poor Choice		Soul search, apologise, make amends and reconsider your role in the organisation.
Leader does <i>not quite</i> know the right thing to do	Does the right thing	Lucky Break		Count your lucky stars, learn how to do it right consistently.
Leader does <i>not quite</i> know the right thing to do	Tries something but fails	Mistake		Own it, apologise, consult and learn how to do it right next time.
Leader does <i>not quite</i> know the right thing to do	Does not even try	Neglect		Soul search, apologise, reconsider your role in the organisation.

3. The best leaders are **thoughtful**. By empathising with others, tempering impulsive reactions, and consulting with colleagues in complex situations, the best leaders avoid making a Poor Choice too often.

There are many other qualities of a great leadership, of course. Among the most important traits are awareness, effort, and thoughtfulness, as noted above. This triad obviates Neglect and minimises Poor Choices. Great leaders are, by definition, not neglectful or foolish. The triad of awareness, effort, and thoughtfulness also maximizes Success. All leaders - even bad ones - have some Lucky Breaks. Mostly, though, they experience Success. All leaders also have an occasional Accident and make an occasional Mistake. What then? The answer separates the good from the bad leaders. Leadership after failure is a litmus test.

Accidents are typically forgiven. The group is often sympathetic after observing that the leader tried hard and acted within his or her domain of competence. The group (and the leader) may be disappointed, but the leader's good faith effort has set a good example and no one feels duped or abandoned. With Accidents, leaders are well served to reflect on what their misstep was, to openly apologize (even if the group

has already expressed forgiveness), to make amends (especially if someone was hurt or an important outcome wasn't achieved), and to think and talk about how to do things better next time.

Mistakes are different. Forgiveness is sometimes not forthcoming. Therefore, the best leaders recover from Mistakes by quickly **owning** them. Laying the responsibility elsewhere, spinning the Mistake as a triumph, or pretending there was actually no Mistake are all defensive reactions grounded in the fear that admitting a Mistake may cause the group to lose respect for the leader. Paradoxically, owning Mistakes - if such Mistakes are generally uncommon - usually causes the group to feel enhanced respect for their leader. Indeed, every member of the group knows that Mistakes are human, so this admission humanises the leader. It also sets a good example for others to follow.

After owning their Mistake, the best leaders offer a sincere **apology**. Delaying this expression of regret only hardens the group's hearts. By contrast, saying, "I'm sorry that I made this mistake," provides an opportunity to move ahead, both interpersonally and professionally. The best leaders understand that respect is grounded in relationships. Without strong interpersonal connections between a leader

and his or her group, great achievements may be kept at bay.

Next, the best leaders **learn**. They consult with other leaders, listen carefully to feedback from the group, and hone skills that will help achieve Success in similar scenarios. When the group sees that the leader has continued to work toward preventing the same Mistake in the future, forgiveness is palatable. Without excessive self-deprecation, great leaders can also return to the Mistake, offer the group a narrative of what transpired and where the misstep was, and what's being done to prevent a similar Mistake in the future.

Offering **narratives** highlights another cornerstone of great leadership. The best leaders have, of course, learned from their mistakes. However, they refrain from telling "war stories" about their mistake-riddled past for two reasons: First, war stories, while dramatic and sometimes entertaining, glorify the Mistake. Such glorification may mislead members of the group into believing that they should intentionally make Mistakes so that they, too, can hold court around the common room or staff lounge. Second, if war stories become a central feature of *how* someone leads, it can distort the perceived frequency of Mistakes. Members of the group may believe that Mistakes are more commonplace than they are.



Being a great leader is not a popularity contest. Success, as defined in Table 1, is not always the action that brings the group immediate pleasure, especially when the leader is acting in the group's long-term best interests. Mistakes are unpleasant for both the leader and the group. However, Mistakes provide the sorts of leadership opportunities that separate the best from the mediocre. The process of owning, apologising, and learning is healthy for any group. Mistakes give leaders opportunities to show how they earned their position. Indeed, great leaders continuously work to earn the title that goes with their job.

How might solid leadership look in a boarding school?

Mr. Blanchard is an English teacher who was appointed three years ago. In an effort to ignite more enthusiasm in his students during their unit on Shakespeare, Mr. Blanchard assigns roles to various students, takes the entire class outside, and asks them to read their parts aloud. Although he has never taught Shakespeare—or any other playwright—using this method, he is hopeful that his students will rise to the occasion. But rather than breathing new life into the characters, the students are distracted, they read their lines sarcastically, and the class devolves to the point where Mr. Blanchard struggles to gather them together at the end to announce tomorrow's assignment.

Had things gone as hoped, that would have been a Lucky Break. Had Mr. Blanchard used this method before, with some success, this particular flop would have been an Accident. As it stands, this event has all the markers of a classic Mistake. Mr. Blanchard did *not quite* know what he was doing, he tried something new (a good thing) but it was unsuccessful.

Mr. Blanchard could respond by blaming some external force, such as the students being insolent, the outdoors being distracting, or Shakespeare being inaccessible to contemporary youth.

Alternatively, Mr. Blanchard could (see Table 1) own his mistake, apologise, consult, and learn how to do it right next time. Later that day, he might stop by a colleague's classroom, or search online, or telephone his university mentor to discover how other English teachers use student actors to bring Shakespeare plays alive. He might study a few of these options in depth, pick one, customize it to better fit the needs of his students, and prepare for the next class meeting.

The next time this class meets, he could apologize for a poorly planned class, explain his rationale for having brought the students outside for a live reading, share his observations about what worked and what did not, and prepare them for an alternate approach to live reading.

Perhaps students work in pairs first, to gain confidence reading Shakespeare aloud and help one another decode some of the old English terminology. Perhaps Mr. Blanchard then has them rewrite a few lines of dialogue in modern English. Perhaps then the students would have enough confidence and personal investment that bringing them outside would not be boring or distracting.

You can imagine a similarly humble and effective rebound with a well-intentioned boarding staff who attempts to innovate weekend programming or manage a high-conflict situation between two students, but who fails on the initial attempt. The details of what a teacher or boarding staff member does to own a mistake, apologise, consult, and improve on the next attempt are far less important than their commitment to continuous professional development. As the saying goes, *It's not how you fall, it's how you get up.* No mistake is a failure if you persist.



Dr. Christopher Thurber is a clinical psychologist and professional educator who uses innovative content to stir thinking and compel action. An entrepreneur from a young age, Chris is the co-founder of Prep4School.com, which helps new students adjust to the rigors of top-tier secondary schools and universities. A respected authority on psychology and leadership, Chris has been invited to deliver keynotes, contribute articles, and lead workshops at schools and camps on five continents. Learn more about Chris's books, articles, videos, in-person workshops, and virtual consultations by visiting DrChrisThurber.com

Managing Social Media Risks in School Boarding Houses

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Social media may have its virtues but it produces a lot of headaches for managers of organisations having care of young people (and work for lawyers). It also contributes to the blurring of private/professional life boundaries, and increases the need for clarity and transparency.

A recent publication by CompliSpace entitled "Managing Social Media Risks in Schools" and dated August 2019 will be of assistance to school boarding house staff. As with so many issues, the fact that staff have students in their care 24/7 makes even more important a confident understanding of the law and the managing of legal risk.

CompliSpace is a provider of governance, risk, compliance and policy programs and consulting services to a variety of organisations across a range of industry sectors, in particular non-government schools across Australia¹. This publication is available to those who subscribe to CompliSpace's online publication "School Governance". Such subscription can be arranged through the website without charge.

The purpose of this article is to draw attention to this valuable 25 page publication and to indicate in a general way the topics dealt with.

After some discussion of social media risks in schools, the publication then turns to four major topics: "School Risks", "Staff Risks", "Student Risks" and "Staff-Student Risks". This is followed by a summary, a brief indication of how CompliSpace can help, some (online resources and a bibliography).

Within Section Two entitled "School Risks" as above, after an overview there is an identification of key school risks, discussion of privacy and confidentiality in terms of key risk description and mitigating the risks, and then a case study, discussion of an emerging risk, the possible significance of a parent code of conduct and a social media business usage policy. The section concludes with some recommendations.

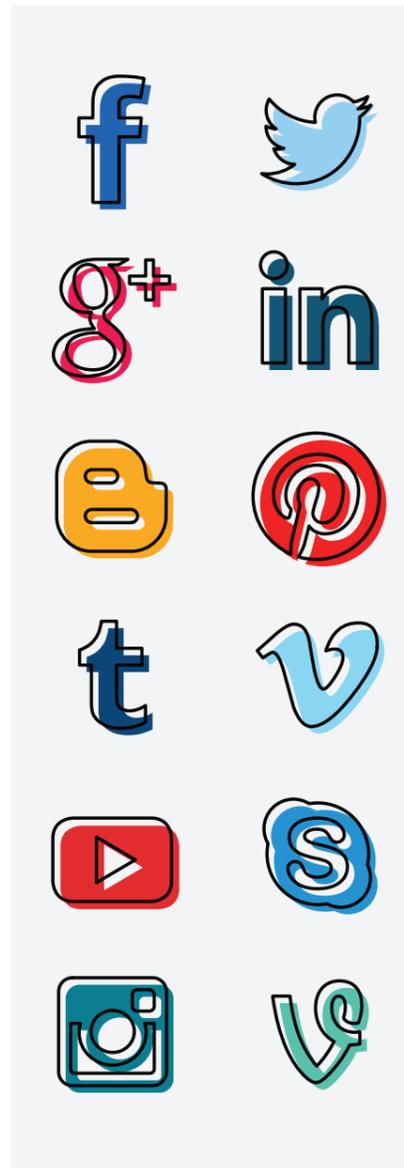
Section Three entitled "Staff Risks" discusses two case studies and then deals with the mitigation of staff risks by the use of a social media personal usage policy, and then lists dos and don'ts of social media by staff (a particularly useful part of the publication) and concludes with some recommendations.

Section Four entitled "Student Risks" discusses the key risk in relation to cyber safety and child safety risks, issues to do with mitigation involving both initiatives and key policies and procedures, child safe codes of conduct, a student usage social media policy, the question of whether mobile phone use should be banned in schools and concludes with some recommendations.

In Section Five entitled "Staff-Student Risks" there is discussion of grooming laws, mitigation of staff student-risks and recommendations.

This is a very useful publication as in two dozen pages it provides much useful advice and recommendations to deal with a problem which is unlikely to become easier to manage in the near future. A publication such as this can certainly assist with awareness raising and hopefully both.

¹ The author does not now have and has at no time had any pecuniary interest in or contractual relationship with CompliSpace. The author respects what CompliSpace does and has a friendly professional association from time to time with representatives of CompliSpace at major conferences.





From Magazines to Screens: Tackling Young People's Exposure to Pornography

AUTHOR

Brandon Friedman
Co-Founder of Elephant Ed

THERE is no question about it: we are living in an unprecedented era. Access to technology is like the world has never seen it. We have direct access to the world in our very pockets; the touch of a finger, a swipe of the hand, or more recently, a glance of the eyes. We like to say we are in control of our own technology, but in reality, and as much as we try to deny it, it is in-fact technology controlling us.

While we accept the use of devices in our everyday life, we ignore the dark cloud hovering over our future generations, representing the question we refuse to confront: how do we take back control?

Our young ones know no different. And that's not their fault. They are born into technology. Unfortunately, increased access to technology has also increased potential access to harmful online material. Elephant Ed, a leading sex education provider in Australia, work with tens of thousands of young people every year. In doing so, we gain a strong insight into young people's lives, helping them navigate the nuances and complexities of the online world. What has become apparent within schools over recent years is the undeniable fact that pornography has become the default sex educator.



No longer are magazines kept underneath a bed or hidden away for nobody to find. A 2017 Burnet Institute survey, studying pornography use in Australia, found four in five young men and almost three in four young women, from the age of 15, are viewing pornography on a weekly and monthly basis, respectively. Like I said, an unprecedented era.

Not only are young people viewing pornography in greater numbers and at higher frequencies, they are starting younger than ever. In fact, the same study showed the median age for first time exposure as 13 years old for boys and 16 years old for girls.

Exposure to pornography can have harmful effects on young people. Pornography creates a "sexual template" for young people to follow in their own sexual encounters. The problem, however, lies

in the fact this template is fraught with distorted perceptions of what a real-life, healthy sexual relationship should look and feel like.

Body image

Let's start with body image. When young people are exposed to pornography, they are burdened with unrealistic ideals about beauty and body image. They are made to feel as though they need to look a certain way.

This is reinforced through the myriad of sexualised images we see on billboards, buses and music videos pervading our everyday lives. From the air-brushed and photo-shopped models on social media to the surgically enhanced "stars" seen in pornography, we are constantly barraged with unrealistic representations of the human body. We are hidden from the unique beauty present in the diversity of shapes and sizes.

One can only imagine the immense pressure these ideals place on young people, and the ensuing anxiety around one's own sexual appeal. And the scary part? This pressure has prompted teens to seek to perfect their bodies, often through plastic surgery, to reflect what they see on their screens. Only recently did we have a plastic surgeon stand up at a Parent Seminar and explain how she had been horrified by the number of teenage girls who approach her asking for labiaplasty surgery (a surgical procedure



to "neaten" the labia). Not to mention the spike in laser hair removal. Not surprising given Vannier, Currie & O'Sullivan's 2014 study highlighted a large proportion of male pornography actors groomed (46%) or completely removed (35%) their pubic hair, compared with female actors who typically had no pubic hair (61%) or groomed pubic hair (30%).

Sexual behaviour

Next, sexual behaviour. Not only can exposure to pornography influence one's perception of their own and others' appearance, it influences their expectations around appropriate and "normal" sexual behaviour.

Pornography shapes sexual practices, with research suggesting young people often try to perform common sexual acts seen in dominant heteronormative pornography scenes. Facial ejaculation, sex with multiple partners and deep fellatio are now considered the "norm".

Pornography is also strongly associated with unsafe sexual health practices, including an obvious lack of condom use. A 2010 content analysis of 45 randomly selected free pornographic videos from 15 popular (heterosexual) websites, found condom use was "virtually non-existent", used in only two per cent of scenes.

Gender and power imbalance

And finally, and arguably the most concerning, is pornography's portrayal of gender and power. A 2015 analysis of 400 pornographic videos from the four most visited pornographic websites, found men were more likely to be depicted as dominant (39%) and women as submissive (43%). This was all while 88% of scenes contained some form of physical aggression. Even worse,

94% of the aggression was directed toward female performers. What message is this sending?

Education as the solution

So, where to from here? Without guidance or education in how to properly navigate the space, we may be only seeing the beginning of the impact.



Young people are rarely armed with the appropriate knowledge and information to critically analyse the explicit content they consume.

Education is critical to enable young people to understand the complexity and unrealistic nature of explicit imagery. The reality, however, is that pornography remains a taboo subject within schools and at home. It is up to teacher, boarding staff, parents and guardians - as a team - to start open conversations and talk about the elephant in the room. It is their duty of care to provide accurate information and be a source young people can trust.

If you're thinking right now, "not my child", well, I have some bad news.

NSPCC's recent research found 46% of minors first-time exposure to pornography was accidental. So, even for those who do not intentionally seek out this material, given the scope for accidental exposure, often as a result of pop-ups, dodgy links, cheeky siblings or friends in the school yard, education remains crucial.

To those thinking pornography is a "boys problem", think for a second about the impact of engaging in sexual activity with someone who has indeed been exposed to pornography and its unrealistic expectations. How are they to know what is real, and what is not?

Everyone needs to be armed with the information to not only critically analyse the media they intentionally or unintentionally consume, but more importantly, to stand up to misogynistic, unsafe sexual behaviour.

Young people's exposure to technology and explicit imagery is going nowhere. It's advancing at a scarily fast pace. Education in the area needs to get its act together if we are any chance of building a positive and healthy future for our incoming generations.

Are you ready to start the conversation?

Brandon Friedman a Co-Founder of Elephant Ed. Elephant Ed send young, relatable and highly trained facilitators to deliver fun and engaging sex education workshops to schools, universities and community groups. Elephant Ed empower tens of thousands of young people every year to make informed decisions around relationships, sexuality and growing up.

If you are interested in Elephant Ed working with your school, university or organisation, feel free to contact Brandon on 0421 123 189 or at brandon@elephanted.com.au.



Boarding Schools and Bushfires - Readiness, Recovery and Wellbeing

A Real-life Scenario

AUTHOR

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I recall a phone conversation that I had with a Head of Boarding from a metropolitan school in Perth with a sizeable boarding population on a particularly hot Summer day in late-January 2011. School was still one week away from commencing but their boarding students had already started to arrive and settle into their rooms for the year.

the letter. Prompt action and pre-planning was the absolute key to ensuring the safety of all the students and the staff. Their safety zone had water bottles, asthma inhalers, first aid kits, blankets and other essential necessities. They also had access to lists of students and staff, contact details for parents/guardians and they followed their communication protocols to ensure that all parents were assured of their children's safety.

There was no loss of property or damage as, thanks to DFES and the prompt phone call by the school, the fire was quickly contained. The students were not panicked as the staff were calm and followed their rehearsed protocols and procedures. They were well prepared for the possibility of a fire; they were able to recover quickly, and student and staff well-being was considered first and foremost at all times.

However, the situation could have been remarkably different if the school was not well prepared and if the student who first saw the smoke failed to report it or if the report was not believed and swiftly acted on by staff.



One of the boarders noticed smoke from the public open space that was a few hundred metres to the east of the school and reported this possible fire to a boarding supervisor. There had been no prior notification from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES), as was usually the case. This was because it was the boarder who was the first to spot and report the emergency. The school immediately called 000 to report the fire and then, as the fire was gaining intensity and the staff were unsure of its direction, they evacuated the students to the school 'safer zone' and waited for DFES to attend and announce the all clear.

Even though the school was in the metropolitan area, it had a structured Bushfire/Fire emergency evacuation protocol and the staff conducted this to

Bushfire Readiness

In School Governance (2017) 'Is your school bushfire ready?' we commented that 'Even schools set in suburban landscapes can be affected by bushfires if they have bush areas on campus or if they are in proximity to public open space or small pockets of undeveloped land.' The article contains several suggested risk mitigation strategies that can apply to all schools and to boarding facilities within schools too.

Many schools with boarding facilities locate their facilities towards the outer boundaries of the school, often to provide the boarders with living space that is sufficiently away from the learning areas to allow them the feeling of being 'away from school' when they return home to their rooms each afternoon. This also means that, particularly with tree coverage and proximity to external fuel sources - such as parklands, that there may be an increased risk of fire.

Schools need to ensure that there is fuel load reduction around their boarding facilities by having fuel sources cleared at least 20 metres from around buildings to create an 'Asset Protection Zone' (APZ). They need to remove tree branches that 'overhang' buildings, prepare for 'ember attacks' by ensuring that air-conditioners can be turned off and by having no leaf litter and other fuel sources in guttering or on roof spaces, ensure that all evacuation paths are clear of clutter and ensure that their 'safer zone' or 'safer space' is already prepared and ready in the event that it must be used to save lives.



Remember that fire and heat is not the only threat. Poor air quality caused by excessive smoke and airborne particulates can also trigger asthma-like symptoms and a raft of respiratory and pulmonary ailments in children and adults alike.

Staff Training

Boarding staff should be trained in the use of firefighting equipment such as fire extinguishers, fire blankets and fire hoses. Prompt action to extinguish small internal or external fires or dousing ember attacks may reduce the risk of potentially greater fire dangers.

In addition, have your supervisory staff been trained in crisis management or trauma or grief management? Given that many families around the country will be affected by the recent bushfires either through direct loss or indirect loss - including the loss of property and/or family members, would it not be sensible for staff to receive training in well-being and grief management?

According to The Educator, in their article, "How teachers can help students cope with bushfire trauma", apart from being tasked with educating and protecting children, they have pointed out that teachers working in fire-ravaged areas of Australia will also need to be strong pillars of emotional support for those impacted by the disaster. It is understood, and often simply assumed, that teachers will play critical roles in helping children deal with traumatic issues. Children look to adults as role models in times of need. Professor Marjory Ebbeck, an early childhood education expert from the University of South Australia (UniSA) was quoted as saying, "Teachers are one of the most trusted, reliable and safe adult figures to a child, beyond their immediate family. But, with the school term just around the corner, many teachers are now feeling underprepared."

You and your boarding staff, when meeting the students before school commenced, may have already been faced with questions about fire safety and dealing with issues such as managing grief and loss. Questions such as "Is our boarding house safe?", "What do I say to Jack whose family lost his home?" or "What can I do to help all the animals?" Above all, the students will probably want to be assured that they will be safe in the boarding house, away from their homes and their parents. Their parents will also want the same assurances!

Research on psychological outcomes from disaster media coverage shows that children are particularly vulnerable to trauma resulting from absorbing images and concepts like those that have been broadcasting across Australia in recent weeks. So please do not assume that if your school is in an area that has not been directly affected by the bushfires, that your students will all be fine.

There is a very strong possibility that many of your boarders, and maybe some of your staff, returned this year carrying their own burden of loss. Did you prepare for this very sad possibility?

To help schools with these challenges, the learning team at CompliSpace have curated/created a Bushfire Safety & Wellbeing Learning List for schools - free of charge, that covers both the practical and emotional sides of bushfire readiness and recovery.

Evacuation and Emergency/Critical Incident Plans

Do you have an up-to-date and working Emergency and Critical Incident Plan that includes bushfire or fire preparedness, lock down (to a safer location on campus) or evacuation (to a safer location off campus)? Of course, for your boarding facilities, this should include out of hours events.

Has your plan been communicated to all boarders, supervisory and ancillary staff, parents and your school bus company? Has your school conducted emergency evacuation drills? Have you conducted an 'out-of-hours' drill for your boarding staff and students? Is a drill planned for early in the first term?

Communication

And finally, do you have clear communication plans and strategies?

Communication plans are essential to both communicate your school's level of preparedness for fires and critical incidents to ALL members of your school community and to have plans in place in the event of a lock down or evacuation.

Summary

It is simply unthinkable for a school or a boarding facility within a school to be complacent about being bushfire prepared. It is also unthinkable that a school would not place the safety and well-being of its students and staff as its highest priority.

Was your school prepared for the return of your staff and boarders this year? Could you have done anything better?

A bushfire risk management process, as part of a school's total Enterprise Risk Management system, would provide a framework for the effective management of bushfire (and bushfire related) threats in schools and it would accommodate the changing climate and weather patterns. A risk management process would focus the school's attention on both the threats and the emergencies/critical incidents and on the context in which these are set within the school.

Schools that may be directly affected by bushfires, smoke or indirectly through losses of enrolments (particularly boarders) due to fires cannot afford to be complacent regarding this ever present risk.



Financial Learning by Chance or Financial Learning by Intention: What is Your Wellbeing Choice?

AUTHOR

Ken Swan
The Wealth Academy

When it comes to learning, what choices do we make for our children and students? Do we choose to let them learn to drive by chance, hoping they will always make the right decision in a car and on the road? No, we would never do that. We spend many hours, and considerable money giving our children the best possible chance to drive safely in the future. We determine that road safety is essential so we give them driving lessons.

Do we choose to let them learn to swim by chance, hoping they will always make the right decision in a pool, dam or river, or at the beach? No, we would never do that. Once again, we spend many hours, and considerable money giving our children the best possible chance to swim safely in the future. We determine that water safety is essential and so we give them swimming lessons.

What about financial safety? Is financial safety essential? Do we choose to let our children learn to make financial decisions by chance, hoping they will know how to make informed financial decision in their future? In fact, for many schools and in many families, that is exactly what happens. It is distressing to see the research reflecting the views of many teens when they leave school, that in fact, they received no financial education.

It is distressing to see the growing research related to financial wellbeing, with increasing numbers of Australians in financial stress. For me, it is distressing to see families with wealth not protecting their children's future mental health by facilitating and nurturing their future financial capability now. Research clearly shows that the health and wellbeing of a person is aligned to their capability to make informed family decisions.

When I visit boarding schools, I hear many reasons for NOT doing financial education, as listed on page 13. Financial learning will occur by chance, but often from the mistakes that occur. It is better to intentionally present financial learning opportunities to boarders in a safe, controlled and managed environment before they have to make the real decisions when they leave school.

The easy decision is to find a reason not to commit to the financial capability and wellbeing of our boarders.

The right decision is to find a way to make it happen.

The decision that commits to the future health and wellbeing of boarders is a long-term commitment across all age groups to improving boarder financial capability.

We are here to help.



I am too busy. We are too busy.

We live in a busy world and schools are probably getting busier. However, we always find time for things that are important.

Our resources can be used incidentally which take up almost no time. There is always a way.

The kids are not interested.

Yes, this applies to most children in most cases. But when has that ever stopped an adult or teacher taking responsibility to teach things to children that they will need to know in the future. Most kids would choose to do very little at school if adults did not make them.

The reality is that many students think financial education is about a mathematics lesson. It shouldn't be. It should be about the behaviours, habits, attitudes, peer pressures, decision-making processes, work skills and more that become part of everyday life in the future.

I am not confident my staff could do this.

Boarding houses have choices. They do not have to use existing staff.

If they choose to use TWA resources then they all come with lesson plans and any teacher could implement. Alternatively, they can use community partners. We can help any boarding house to find a solution.

They do financial education in the day school. it is not my responsibility!

Hmmm, this is hand-passing responsibility.

Firstly, most schools are doing very little if anything regarding financial education.

Secondly, boarders are in the unique position of living away from home and are more prone to other students to peer financial pressure. They have a different set of needs. Financial education is one of those needs that should be met in the boarding house.

We have more important things to focus on.

There are many competing demands on the time and effort of the boarding house. They are of course, all important. Sometimes, some of these things are more important because they are about the now. Financial education is more subtle and long term.

But, it is now when teens are forming many of the financial habits that they will take into the new world. They are subtle and often hidden. This does not make financial education unimportant



The Life of a Boarding Community

AUTHOR

Casey Brealy
Head of Cotter Boarding House
St Joseph's Nudgee College

Nudgee College recently experienced every school community's worst nightmare, the death of a recent old boy. Whilst I did not know Peter Tennant, as I have only recently started at Nudgee, it was clear that the school was a gigantic part of his life and that he was a valued and respected member of the large Nudgee community. A testament to this was his moving funeral hosted in the College Chapel. The service



Timothy Baldwin



Peter Tennant



Peter Fowler

included a Eulogy from his House Dean (Julianne Daunt), the reading of a letter from his Year 12 Kairos Retreat and a guard of honour formed by the current Nudgee boys. Nudgee spirit was at the core of this solemn occasion.

Only weeks earlier was the celebration and commemoration of another Nudgee old boy, Victor Dalle Cout. Whilst Victor was much older than Peter, Nudgee was still a gigantic part of his life. During Nudgee's

recent tour of Townsville, Victor's son, Isi, spoke emotionally about the central role that the school had played in his father's life. He also profoundly recounted the ways in which his father's love for Nudgee were acknowledged during the recent funeral. A 1949 senior, Victor was laid to rest with a Nudgee rugby jersey draped over his casket - Nudgee Spirit truly never sleeps.

In my few months at Nudgee, these moments have clearly demonstrated the culture and ongoing brotherhood that exists within the school. Whilst both were sombre occasions, it is in these moments that you realise how important a school community can be. More poignantly, when we look at these examples, we realise how important a school's boarding community can be.



The loss of a past boarder is always a difficult occasion, but students are not the only people who are consumed by the boarding

culture of a school. These significant events forced me to reflect on my schooling at Marist College Ashgrove. Ashgrove, another school with a large community centred on boarding, were rocked by the death of two outstanding staff members in 2010 and 2011. As an old boy, I vividly remember attending the funerals of boarding legends Mr Tim Baldwin and Mr Peter Fowler. Both men had a profound influence on the boys in their care, whether that be in the classroom or in the boarding houses. This influence was demonstrated by the packed gymnasium filled with current students and old boys who gathered to celebrate their lives. Working in boarding, I certainly hope to emulate their ability to forge meaningful and authentic relationships with their students.

Whilst this article so far has focussed on death, it is actually intended to be about the exact opposite. This article is about the life of a boarding community. This sounds like a strange juxtaposition, but please bear with me as I find my way to the message.

The life of a boarding community is on display every day in every boarding school around Australia. This life may be lived differently in different communities, but anyone in boarding can attest to the visible, and almost tangible, displays of boarding community that we witness on a daily basis.



It could be a group of students playing touch on the oval or cooking a BBQ together. It could be a bunch of boys bonding over their love of the North Queensland Cowboys as they sit in the common room watching them battle it out with the Broncos on a Thursday evening.

It could be a gathering of boarders sitting around with a guitar and sharing some music. It could be any one of a million things that make boarding the amazing, vibrant and life-changing experience that it is.



However, like so many things, often we do not know or appreciate how special something is until it is gone. We often find that boarders reflect on how much the community has meant to them as they near

the end of their journey or even after they have left the gates of the College. I guess this is human nature in a way. But what led me to write this reflective piece is a simple concept - in death, a boarding community is at its most alive. The examples that I spoke of earlier in this piece attest to this statement. Boarding communities, like Nudgee College, flourish in the good times. However, more importantly, they band together in the hard times. As painful as these occasions are, there is a certain beauty in the display of the deep-seated connection that students and staff have to their boarding school.

These four men are only a few examples of the ways in which boarding can touch the lives of all involved. The life within a boarding community is a truly remarkable phenomenon, one that transcends death.

We hold Peter, Victor, Tim and Peter in our memories and we thank them all for playing a part in the life of boarding.

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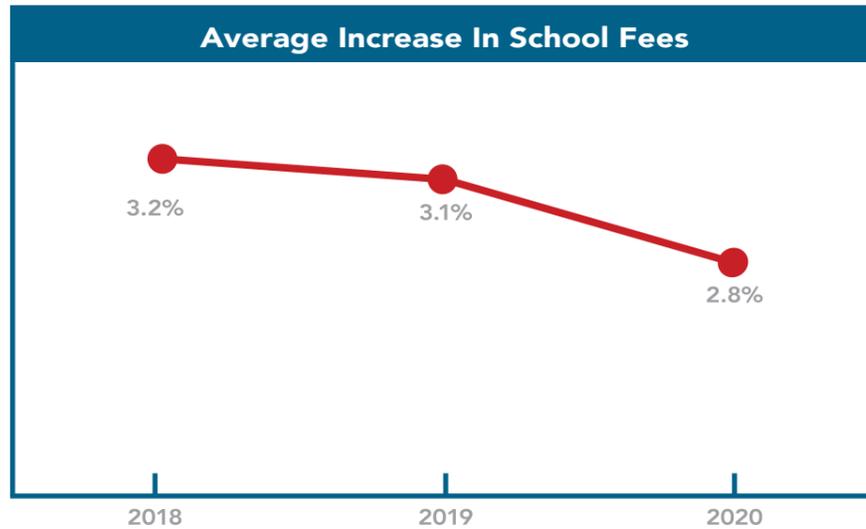
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Relief for Families as Schools Lower Fee Increases

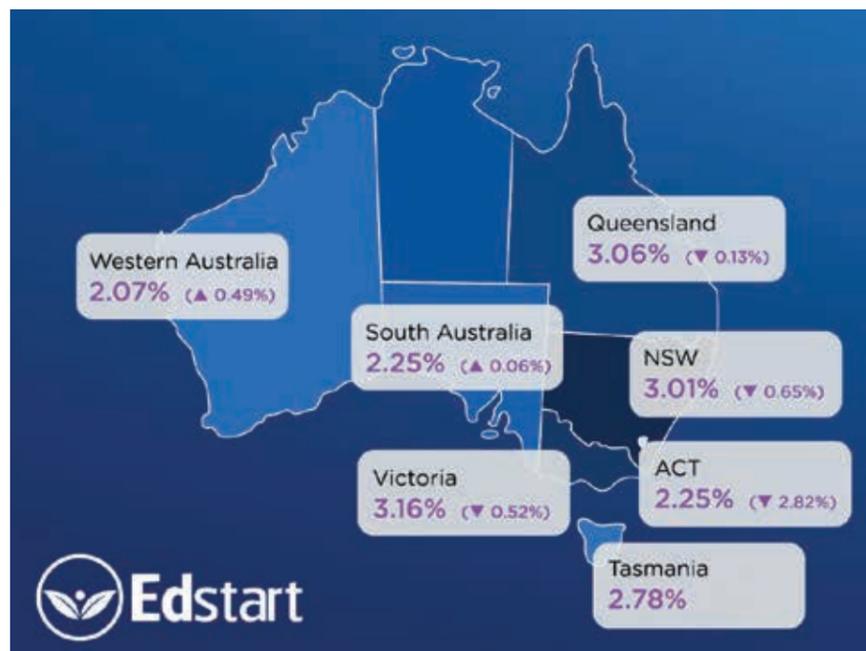
AUTHOR
Jack Stevens
Co-founder and CEO
Edstart



Fee increases at non-Governments schools fell in 2020 as families across Australia face low wage growth and a softening economy. Edstart's latest analysis of fees at 335 schools found that school fees rose by an average of 2.8% in 2020, down from 3.1% the previous year.

We also found more schools have kept fee increases below national inflation and wage growth rates. Some schools have even reduced fees by more than 10%. With 43% of Year 12 students across the country attending a non-Government school¹, this is good news for many families.

Over the past three years, there has been a gradual drop in the percentage increase in school fees from 3.2% to 2.8% this year.



Lower-fee schools driving the fall in fee increases

While higher fee schools continued to maintain a consistent trend of fee increases of between 3% to 4%, middle and lower fee schools drove the overall rate of fee increase lower. This reversed the trend from 2019 when many middle and lower fees schools made larger fee adjustments to compensate for changes to government funding models.

These schools are generally more susceptible to changes in their environment such as government funding and enrolment numbers. As a result, they are more likely to respond and adjust their fees accordingly.

Differences between states

There were geographic variances between states with Victoria leading the way with the highest increase at 3.16% and having the most expensive school in Australia with fees of \$42,500. This was followed by Queensland at 3.06%, NSW at 3.01%, Tasmania at 2.78%, the ACT and South Australia at 2.25% and Western Australia at 2.07%.

The Eastern states experienced a decline in the rate of increase in school fees. There was a notable fall in the ACT which is a correction to larger increases that occurred last year. In contrast, the rate of increase rose in South Australia and Western Australia.

Boarding fees follow trend

The average increase in boarding fees was 2.48%, down slightly from 2.61% in 2019. There was an increase in the number of schools that either did not increase their boarding fees or kept fee increases below the national inflation rate.

¹ Source: Australian Bureau of Statistic (ABS)

Edstart's National School Fees Report aims to help Australians understand the trends in private school fees and be able to better manage these costs. To download the full report, visit edstart.com.au/report.

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Captains of Change or Custodians of Transformation

Which one are we?

AUTHOR
Ryan Fowler
Head of Boarding House
Toowoomba Grammar School

"Yes, your transformation will be hard. Yes, you will feel frightened, messed up and knocked down. Yes, you'll want to stop. Yes, it's the best work you'll ever do." - Robin Sharma



Being involved in education allows you the opportunity to be part of a student's journey that hopefully will see change. But is change enough? Is that what we as educators should be striving for or is that just an inevitable step that we facilitate for our students.

As a sports coach, your job is to work with and develop the pathway of a player in order to see their dreams come true, not yours. If at any stage your own interests supersede those of the player, then unfortunately the player will never be able to reach their goal and you as a coach have missed the mark. The beauty of the process (for the coach) in trying not to miss the mark is then in the detail. The intricate moments. The precise detail and plan. The engagement with the player. However sometimes this detail can be blurred or mishandled and as such, we as the educators/coach, don't quite grasp whether it was change or transformation that we were seeking.

So, the question remains – Is it just change that we as educators seek? Or should it be transformation within our student that we wish to achieve? Is it the ability to just simply **change their views** or **transform their thinking** that we must explore and how does this apply to teaching and boarding?

In boarding, the role of the tutor and housemaster is even more pronounced due to the very nature of living with students and seeing their every move, analysing

their every path (both inside and outside the classroom) in an effort to see maturity and growth as a result of their educational journey. Given this, a boarding house relies on the collaborative approach in order to not just get the job done, but importantly to see the job through and the student's pathway secure.

In education (as in boarding), it is essential to create a learning space and home environment that is open to communication, innovation and differentiation. This will hopefully ensure that all students are



challenged and provided with opportunities to develop character and personal growth. It is also imperative that all students always feel valued and respected. As the African Proverb states, **"It takes a whole village to raise a child"** and as such we, as the mentors of students, need to collaborate to generate the best possible environment in which students can thrive.

Now for the educator, our general mission should be to see the development of the whole child – intellectually, physically, socially, emotionally and spiritually. This means the relationship between the student and teacher is of paramount importance. Pastoral care of every child requires that teachers know their students' individual needs and tailor the learning situation to fit those needs and personalised learning. My aim then, as an educator in the boarding

house, is to help students engage with this concept, but to also develop a good self-image, to appreciate the rights of others, to know their own strengths and weaknesses and to be able to cope with them. A good relationship between a student's home and the school is essential in achieving this aim, with the teacher being involved in all facets of the school community...ultimately the student's life.

So, to be a custodian of transformation is an area that in education and in boarding should become the backbone of why we do what we do; when we do what we do and how we do what we do.

To just see **change** is merely to just witness the student's life and hope nothing goes wrong, but to **transform** means to invest, to nurture and make even the little things (that

all students go through, but as boarders they experience away from their families) matter and count. The quote referenced above by Robin Sharma really depicts how transformation is meant to be.

The quote echoes the hard work needed to instigate **transformation**. Now like most things, we often try to pretty things up and say that the pathway will be easy and smooth, but in truth this is not the case. What I believe the quote is trying to highlight is that the right way is still and will always be the right way, but this does not mean that it won't involve hard work, disappointments and crossroads where you and the student will want to stop. No journey is the same, but once you can see the job through instead of just seeing the job done, then as Robin Sharma highlights "it's the best work you'll ever do".

So, within our teaching and in boarding, we must strive to be Custodians of Transformation and not just Captains of Change. Like a caterpillar that transforms into a butterfly, if we are able to invest into the **transformation of students** rather than just the **ability to change a student**, then hopefully we will see students become mature thinkers and individuals that will 100% (without question) see the job through and not just the job finished. Then and only then can we truly say well done.

Now that we have unpacked the idea of being a custodian of transformation, the next step is to formulate a series of ways and opportunities that allows educators to do this. The next article in this series will investigate this and how it can be brought to life within the students we teach.





Bunnings in the Community

AUTHOR

Gerard Brewty
Old Area BDM Organisations - Commercial
Bunnings

Bunnings is committed to participating in the communities in which they operate by contributing to local, regional and national causes, charities and organisations throughout Australia and New Zealand.

As part of their commitment to meaningful and active participation in the community their stores provide ongoing assistance to a wide range of local community groups including:

- Schools & kindergartens
- Local sporting groups
- Service clubs (Lions, Rotary etc.)
- Local community groups that assist the disadvantaged
- Local health & wellbeing
- Junior community groups (Scouts, Girl Guides etc.)



Bunnings' community support initiatives are continuously evolving and expanding. They recently partnered with BUSY At Work, an established and trusted not for profit organisation providing career opportunities to job seekers and students through apprenticeship, employment and education support programs, to create the Try a Trade event.

Try a Trade aimed to assist young people who have a strong interest in the trades make an informed decision on a career path through a practical experience at the event and discussion with trainers and apprentices. Attended by schools, Tafe QLD, Registered Training Organisations, government information services as well as various support providers, many of the attendees left the event having entered into an apprenticeship.

In an effort to promote a career in the construction industry amongst women, Bunnings has joined with The National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) to support the Women On Tools Event. An Australian not-for-profit organisation, NAWIC is led by a team of passionate volunteers who all strive to help champion and empower women in the construction and related industries to reach their full potential.



Bunnings has also continued to grow their relationship with The Clontarf Foundation, whose programme was developed to improve self-esteem and confidence in young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men to assist them to participate in education, employment and society in a positive way.

Commencing in 2000 with a single academy at Clontarf Aboriginal College in Waterford, WA, the Foundation now operates across the country, supports more than 8,000 participants and 428 employees. Since becoming the first corporate partner in 2001 with their parent company Wesfarmers, Bunnings have employed six Indigenous Employment Advisors Australia-wide to facilitate Indigenous employment within and external to the business.

Bunnings are proud to partner with so many organisations and local community group who endeavour to make a real difference in their local communities. To find out more information about community and sustainability actions and highlights from the 2019 financial year as well as their commitments for the year ahead please visit the Bunnings website.



School Website Design Trends for 2020

AUTHOR

Andrew Martin
Finalsite

Website design at Finalsite isn't about chasing the latest design trends. Instead, we strive to stay ahead of the curve so that school websites stay at the forefront of digital design expectations and technological advances.

Award-winning senior website designer Kelly Wilson recently hosted a webinar in which she shared some sneak peeks about where web design trends are headed in the coming year, using examples from schools around the world that are already ahead of the game.

A quick poll launched at the beginning of the webinars found that nearly half of the attendees are always looking to make minor tweaks and changes to their website. Another one-third of attendees said they were looking to redesign their website in the coming year. Whichever bucket you fall in, here are the top web design trends that should be top-of-mind in the new year.

Design Trends to Watch in 2020:

- #1 Use of Purposeful Content
- #2 Editorial-Style Layouts
- #3 Meaningful Motion
- #4 Imperfections that Add Personality
- #5 Solid Frames of White Space
- #6 Personalized Experiences

So.... What exactly is a design trend?

Unlike fads, which can exit the public consciousness just as fast as they became popular, design trends tend to stick around longer. These aesthetic, stylistic, and technique-based trends ultimately guide the creative evolution of all web design for a period of time before being replaced by another emerging trend. Trends come and go for a variety of reasons, such as a collective shift in taste or user behavior and rapid advances in technology and software.

Recognising current trends and, even more importantly, recognising emerging design trends can help your school stay ahead of the curve with a website that always feels fresh and modern. Annual tweaks and updates can help bridge the gap between a typical three or five-year overhaul. **User expectations evolve over time; your website should, too.**

Trend #1: Purposeful Content

The constant bombardment of commercials, access to far more entertainment than we could ever hope to watch, and the constant presence of our smartphones has shortened **the average person's attention span to about nine seconds.**

Schools have to anticipate what a visitor might want to see and offer them several different choices to *hopefully* capture their attention. This requires schools to think more than ever about what makes them unique.

Kelly suggests **focusing on the two to five things that really makes your school unique**, and place those key points front and center on your homepage. As the schools below demonstrate, these key points don't necessarily have to be a hero slideshow, news slider, or calendar.



St. George's School

<https://www.stgeorges.edu>

St. George's School, both a day and boarding school, recently redesigned their website with a simple, yet effective homepage that greets visitors with a hero slideshow that highlights the school's idyllic campus — definitely enough to capture one's attention in under nine seconds.

The second panel down introduces the school's mission, which is written as a compelling statement.

The next panel down highlights three key differentiators that separate St. George's from the pack: connected learning, Geronimo (a multidimensional program with development of skills in sailing, leadership and teamwork), and the school's location along the Newport, Rhode Island coastline.

Trend #2: Editorial-Style Layouts

Software and coding advances have given web designers more freedom to experiment with new design styles and branch out from the standard grid-style page layout. This freedom has allowed designers to create more compelling pages through:



- More open page competitions and layouts
- A greater emphasis on white space
- Asymmetrical page balance and floating elements
- Overlapping layers with photos and/or video assets
- And a less obvious use of grids to structure pages

An abundance of white space also guides visitors towards the important components of the page, while floating elements help to break up the rigid structure of grid-based pages. Pages feel more natural and can lead to a greater sense of flow and purpose as the visitor is guided down the page from one element to another in a way that feels more organic than grids.



Brentwood School

<https://www.bwscampus.com>

Brentwood School, who took home a Silver award in the 2019 W3 awards for their innovative site, is a fantastic example of why you should ditch traditional website layouts! Brentwood School's website incorporates interesting typography at the top of the homepage that changes colour as you mouse over each letter.

As you scroll down the page, you're greeted with more animations, as the two halves of the next panel move inwards to connect in the centre.

The lack of a two or three column layout and avoidance of grids leads to a homepage that looks and feels more interesting. It creates moments of interest and discovery, especially when a visitor first sees the panels moving in from the sides. It's a unique approach to web design that will likely stick with visitors as they look at other schools with more conventional page layouts.

Trend #3: Meaningful Motion

Motion has already become a key player in web design over the past year. Adding motion to your website — through videos, cinemagraphs, scroll and hover-based animations, and animated cues — helps break up static images and backgrounds on the page, add additional life to the design, and serve as a visual guide to direct a visitor's attention to key spots on a page.

Highline Public Schools

<https://www.highlineschools.org>

Making the most out of small touches, Highline Public Schools added a delayed effect to the corresponding text callout to each of the images in the homepage hero slideshow. It's a simple effect, but it adds



an extra layer of motion that makes the top portion of the homepage feel more dynamic as the visitor clicks through the slideshow.

Highline also makes frequent use of mouse-over or hover-over animations to bring their icons, news thumbnails, and goals section of the website to life with that little bit of extra dynamic flair. The district also incorporated flipping animations for the grid-based "Highline At a Glance" panel to help that portion of the page feel unique alongside the bold color palette.

Trend #4: Imperfections & Personality

Purposeful imperfections in web design have overtaken the standard grid-based design structures of years past as designers are looking for more and creative ways to inject personality to their websites. Imperfections — such as hand-drawn icons, creative and expressive typography, bold colours, soft shadows, unique gradients, textures, 3D graphics, and interactive elements — appeal to a younger audience.

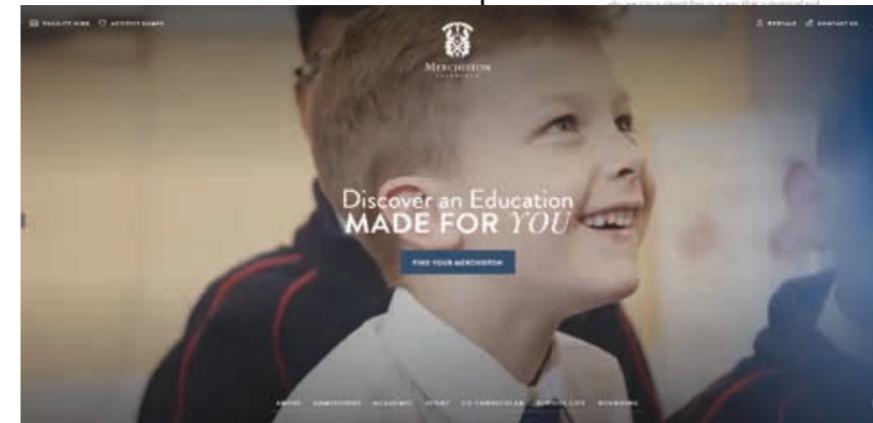
Columbia Grammar & Preparatory School

<https://www.cgps.org>

Columbia Grammar & Preparatory School maximizes the impact of their homepage through numerous imperfections and personality injections. The hero image is framed in a thin yellow border, the typography for the text on the hero image is fun, the arrow that appears over the various grade level callouts is fun and unique, and the hand drawn images in the statistics sliders add that extra layer of personality that really makes it feel more like a scrapbook and less like your standard website.

Trend #5: Solid Frames of White Space

Framing other elements on a page with larger areas of white space is a relatively new design trend that has become popular, because the abundance of white space allows the other visual elements on a page to shine - like being bathed in a spotlight on stage. Additional white space creates a greater sense of structure and helps to prioritize and separate the different elements of a page far more effectively than traditional borders.



Merchiston Castle School

<https://www.highlineschools.org>

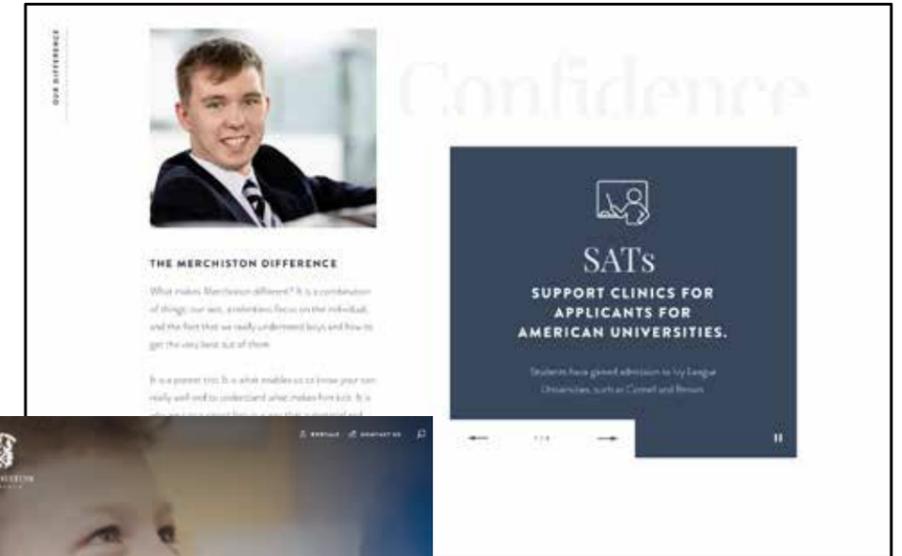
Merchiston School, a leading boarding and day school in the UK, recently launched their new MarCom platinum award-winning website that features a plethora of white space, including framing the top portion of the homepage in a white border, which draws the visitor's attention inwards towards the hero video.

Each section further down the page is set against a white background which helps draw the visitor's attention to each of the panels with key information. When colours are used, such as pinks and blues, the colour palate is soft, which never draws attention away from the photo. Even the larger text that separates and kicks-off each new section is muted and soft to keep attention on the content that matters the most.

Trend #6: Personalised Experiences

Personalised content serves up website content that is most relevant to your website visitors based on key identifiers, such as their geographic location, language, behavior (such as the pages they visit most), and the device they're using.

Crafting a personalized website experience is so important and beneficial that we've even made our own personalisation element as a part of our inbound marketing platform



that automatically changes the content on your website based on those same factors.

Asheville School

<https://www.ashevilleschool.org>

Another recent website launch, Asheville School incorporated many of the design trends featured above (as did all of the schools in this article), but what really stood out to us was the personalised quiz towards the bottom of the homepage.

The "What kind of Blue will you be?" quiz empowers visitors to pick and choose from four possible choices from a short selection of questions targeted towards visitors who may be interested in applying to the school. The visitor's information is collected at



the end of the quiz, and someone from the school can reach out to the visitor at a later date. It's a clever and effective way to essentially gamify the inquiry process that should incentivise more visitors to take action than your typical inquiry form.

Key Takeaway

Ultimately, design trends should work in tandem with your school's message to maximize the impact of your website. While the trends featured in this article may work for the schools we used as examples, it's important to consider each trend to make sure they're the right fit your own school audience.

At the end of the day, take creative risks, be bold in your website design, balance fresh design ideas with the tried-and-true, and start your next redesign with a clear design and launch goal. Should you want or need help during your next website redesign, Finalsite's award-winning deployment and design team is always there to guide you through the entire process.



To Boarding School and Back - How Did They (we) Get There?

AUTHOR

Dr Maree Ganley PhD (ACU)
B.Ed.St; (UQ) B.A (Hons) (UQ)
ASA (Archivists Society of Australia)



Figure 1 Pauline, Pam and Veronica Smith and Isisford children boarding the mail truck for the trip to catch the train to St Ursula's and St Brendan's Colleges Yeppoon

My research involved verbally gathering histories of students who attended the regional boarding school named St Ursula's College in Yeppoon on the central coast of Queensland which opened in 1917. This research included the stories of how students and staff travelled to and from school.

For the students from Central Queensland who attended boarding school, the journey was mostly by train. By 1910 almost all the Queensland railroads had been constructed, demarcating the areas and the focal rail-heads of the inland areas, thus establishing Queensland as one of the most decentralised states in the country. Students, parents and teachers often faced cyclonic conditions which caused floods to reach a regional boarding school on the central coast of Queensland.

There were twenty-six boarders enrolled at St Ursula's College for the first year of 1917. Elizabeth Quinn, the daughter of a shearer from Winton travelled the longest distance of 905 kilometres to Yeppoon. Most travelled on almost 1000 kilometres of direct and branch railway connections to Yeppoon. Many students came from Winton, Longreach, Isisford, Aramac, Blackall, and Borilla near Emerald. From 1938-1944, Patricia Nilson from Carmila in northern coastal Queensland travelled 260 kilometres by train as a ten-year-old to St Ursula's. She recalled 'Each time as I waved goodbye to my parents from the train window I thought, will I ever see them again?'

At the end of the long journey the change in lifestyle for many new boarders was sometimes quite extreme. In 1944 eleven-year-old Mainie lived on a property called Tyrone near the town of Aramac, 646 kilometres from Rockhampton in Central Queensland. Under the pen name of 'Golden Lily', she wrote in the Longreach Leader, February, 1944:

Dear Uncle Jim, this will be my last letter to you for a while as I am going to St Ursula's College, Yeppoon. Dad is coming home on Saturday. We killed a pig on Thursday afternoon.... We went to town last Tuesday and took the baby to the clinic. "Tyrone Lad" took some of the fox scalps and pig snouts and tails in for the bounty. We have four pigs in the sty. Two of them are very small.

In 1996, fifty-two years later Loretta McKeering from the same district around Aramac on a property called 'Stirling' began her journey to boarding school at St Ursula's. She recalled: *I considered myself emotionally and socially stunted when I arrived at St Ursula's for grade eight. All my primary schooling had been by distance education and I much preferred to*

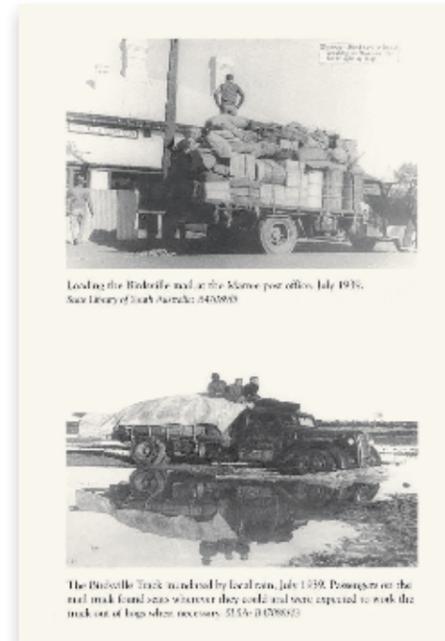


Figure 2 Tom Cruse loading the mail truck with goods and passengers from the railhead at Marree South Australia en route to Birdsville in Queensland

be lonely in wide open spaces with animals, and that homesickness was dealt with by writing in a journal and seeking security under the big eucalyptus trees in the school grounds.

Pauline Foster (Smith) boarded at St Ursula's with her two sisters Pam and Veronica between 1942 and 1949. The children going to the school from Isisford and travelled the ninety kilometres from Isisford to the rail connection at Ilfracombe initially by truck, and then by bus. They boarded the mid-lander train for the 660 kilometres to Rockhampton and then waited several hours for the 6pm train to Yeppoon.

Kay Condon's parents owned the Boulia hotel in the late 1950s and 1960s. She travelled with her brothers and sisters the 1227 kilometres unaccompanied on a trip that took three days to travel one way. From Rockhampton they travelled to Longreach and then by a mixed goods and passenger steam train to Winton. The last leg of their journey from Winton to Boulia was sometimes through the night on the back of a mail truck. Kay recalled:

I shudder now about how we rode on the back of the mail truck in amongst the mail bags, in the dark of night. The driver never checked to see if we were still in the back

of the truck during the journey. We always managed to arrive home safely. After the school holidays we turned around to do it all over again. We never thought there was any other way to live. We remembered the fun we always had, not ever thinking there was any other life.

The experience of the Condon children travelling at some stage of the journey by mail truck was also immortalised in the story of Tom Kruse, known as the mailman of the Birdsville Track. For twenty years he travelled the 1000 kilometres round trip through dirt tracks and over sand hills, from Marree in northern South Australia, to Birdsville in Queensland. From the late 1930s students at boarding schools in Adelaide came from remote properties up to Birdsville in South western Queensland and travelled along the track in Tom Kruse's mail truck. The women and children squeezed into the small cabin and the men sat perched on the back on top of fuel drums and produce sacks.

These experiences of journeying initially into the unknown for children are testimonies to their resilience and ingenuity at such young ages. Australian families had no other option to ensure an adequate education but for their children to travel vast distances to achieve that goal.



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New Principals

Blackheath & Thornburgh College Charters Towers

The Blackheath & Thornburgh College Board is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Simon Murphy as the new Principal of Blackheath & Thornburgh College, commencing in January 2020.

Simon is an experienced Deputy Headmaster coming from Macquarie Anglican Grammar School. The Board was most impressed about Simon's extensive experience in teaching and leading a range of contexts including Government and Grammar Schools throughout

Metropolitan and Regional New South Wales. Simon looks to build a culture driven by student, family and staff collaboration with a strong focus on developing well-rounded young people who can participate actively, think critically and solve problems, and make a valuable contribution to society.

"I believe in leadership through service and action, walking alongside my colleagues providing opportunities for each individual to explore their own trail toward success. As the Principal of Blackheath & Thornburgh College, I look forward to working collaboratively with the board, staff, community and most importantly the students to continue the schools' vision to create successful people of the future".



Mr Simon Murphy
Principal
Blackheath & Thornburgh
College,
Charters Towers , QLD

Clayfield College Brisbane

Dr. Andrew Cousins commenced as the seventh Principal of Clayfield College in January 2020.

Dr. Cousins has an outstanding reputation as an education leader. Prior to his appointment at Clayfield College, he held the positions of Deputy Principal of Presbyterian Ladies' College in Perth and Dean of

Teaching and Learning and Dean of Middle Years Learning at Somerset College on the Gold Coast.

Dr. Cousins is passionate about inspiring a love of lifelong learning in young people, igniting their natural curiosity, and developing them to be bold, imaginative and reflective. "The education of the whole child and providing students with the opportunity to discover their talents have been of particular interest to me for a long time and formed the basis for my PhD in education," Dr. Cousins said.

Dr. Cousins holds a Doctor of Philosophy, a Postgraduate Diploma in Education, a Bachelor of Science, and a Bachelor of Music. He is also a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, an Associate of Music Australia (The Australian Music Examination Board) and served on the Board of Governors at Cromwell College at the University of Queensland.

Dr. Cousins' strong spiritual and community values, passion for music and the sciences, together with his enthusiasm for great educational outcomes for students, align with the values and culture of Clayfield College.



Dr Andrew Cousins
Principal
Clayfield College,
Brisbane, QLD

Djarragun College Gordonvale

Michael Barton commenced as Principal of Djarragun College (Prep to Year 12) in January 2020, after being the Deputy Principal Business Development and Strategy. Djarragun is a non-denominational College with a commitment to developing proud, strong, educated Indigenous men and women, who walk confidently in two worlds, to be leaders, and to be role models for their families and communities. Michael

replaces Kathryn Todd who returned to Education Queensland at the end of December 2019.

Michael has been actively involved in boarding for twenty years, having first worked at The Armidale School as a duty master, Columba Catholic College as Head of Boys' Boarding, Snowy Mountains Grammar School as Deputy Principal and Robb College at the University of New England as Head of College. He brings a wealth of knowledge to the College, particularly his active research in the area of bicultural identity formation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander boarding students.

Michael's focus is on developing strong and positive conditions where school cultures empower all members of the College community to work productively to their potential. He is looking forward to continuing to grow the positive reputation of Djarragun College as a leading independent school for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.



Mr Michael Barton
Principal
Djarragun College,
Gordonvale, QLD

New Principals

Gippsland Grammar Sale

The Gippsland Grammar Board of Directors is thrilled to announce Mrs Leisa Harper has been appointed as the next Principal of Gippsland Grammar. Leisa comes to Gippsland from Rockhampton in Queensland where she was a consultant at The Rockhampton Grammar School. She was previously Principal at Fraser Coast Anglican College and held executive roles at St Paul's School and Brisbane Grammar School. Leisa has worked extensively with the Harvard School of Education and served as a director on the Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ)

Board and Queensland Independent Schools Parent Network since 2015. In addition to her teaching qualifications, Leisa holds a Masters of Business Administration and a Masters of Educational Studies in Adolescent Psychology.

Leisa believes that every child has the right to an inclusive and equitable education that promotes and provides life-long learning opportunities and she is committed to academic excellence and strong pastoral care and co-curricular programs. Leisa is looking forward to meeting the boarding students, and their families.



Mrs Leisa Harper
Principal
Gippsland Grammar,
Sale, VIC

Guildford Grammar School Perth

Guildford Grammar School is delighted to welcome Mrs Anne Dunstan as Principal of the School. Anne commenced in the role in January 2020.

Over the past 23 years Mrs Anne Dunstan has held senior positions in Early Learning to Year 12 in independent schools. She was the Principal of Pulteney Grammar School in Adelaide from 2014 to 2019 and prior to that was the Deputy Head and Head of Senior School at Scotch Oakburn College in Tasmania.

Anne holds a Master of Leadership and Education Management from the University of Newcastle and a Bachelor of Arts and Graduate Diploma of Education from the University of Adelaide.

As an educator, Anne's focus on student engagement and academic rigour has seen students grow and learn in and beyond school. She is also firmly committed to student wellbeing and pastoral care and to the provision of safe, nurturing and collaborative environments where students learn as equals, side by side, while also receiving the individualised support they need to thrive and excel.



Mrs Anne Dunstan
Principal
Guildford Grammar School,
Perth, WA

Huntingtower Melbourne

The Huntingtower community is delighted to welcome Mr Andrew Houghton as the new Principal, commencing from 1st January 2020.

Andrew is a highly regarded educationalist, most recently holding the position of 'Principal Advisor, School Improvement' for Independent Schools Victoria (ISV). In this role, Andrew provided advice and guidance to Independent Schools supporting school improvement, strategic planning and leadership capacity. Naturally through his

inspirational work, Andrew is recognised as a leading mentor to those working in Victoria's independent school sector.

Andrew has had over 20 years' experience in school leadership, including international consulting and the establishment of new schools. Prior to his role with ISV, Andrew was the Principal of a newly established Islamic College in Melbourne. His other roles as Principal and in teaching have included participation at Uniting Church based schools.

His experience stretches across the Junior School and Senior School spectrum and includes an expertise and enthusiasm for Information Technology and e-learning whilst using his management skills to bring harmony through his leadership in the schools that he has led.

Andrew brings to Huntingtower his passion for building vibrant learning cultures through his engagement with the students, staff and parents of our valued Huntingtower community. In his own words "I provide a professional learning environment that promotes education as a 'tool of life' and contributes to the spiritual, emotional and intellectual well-being of the staff and students."



Mr Andrew Houghton
Principal
Huntingtower,
Melbourne, VIC



New Principals

Melbourne Girls Grammar Melbourne

Dr Toni Meath brings broad leadership experience to her position as Principal of one of Australia's leading independent schools, Melbourne Girls Grammar. Prior to this role, Toni led The Mac.Robertson Girls' High School, Victoria's highest performing academic school as Principal for six years with distinction.



Dr Toni E. Meath
Principal
Melbourne Girls Grammar,
Melbourne, VIC

She is an educational leader passionate about the importance of using critical thinking and problem solving in student centred pedagogical approaches as ways to prepare students for success in their future world. Her portfolio across all schools has been one of leading a strong performance and development culture, honouring the important role of students and teachers in leading school transformation and is highly regarded as an educational thinker.

Toni is currently a Board member of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA), a Director of The Alliance of Girls' Schools Australasia (AGSA), on the Victorian Branch Executive for the Australian Council of Educational Leaders (ACEL), is a member of Girls Sport Victoria (GSV) and The Invergowrie Foundation. Previously she has served as an elected Australian member of the World Council of Gifted and Talented Children (2009-2017), the Asia Pacific Federation of Gifted Education (2004 -2008), and as a panel member for the VIT Professional Conduct Branch (2004-2009). Toni was made a National Fellow of ACEL in 2013 for her contribution to education.

Rockhampton Girls Grammar School Rockhampton

Rockhampton Girls Grammar School is delighted to welcome Mrs Deanne Johnston as its Principal, commencing in January 2020.



Mrs Deanne Johnston
Principal
Rockhampton Girls Grammar
School,
Rockhampton, QLD

With over 25 years' experience across independent, Catholic and state schools in Queensland, NSW, the ACT and the UK, Deanne comes with a strong foundation in curriculum, pedagogical development and educational leadership. She has enjoyed the opportunity to contribute to educational reform through 12 years in senior leadership and reference groups.

Deanne also spent twelve months working for the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority, undertaking various projects to provide support and resources for Queensland's teachers. Immediately prior to coming to RGGGS, Deanne was Deputy Principal at Stuartholme School.

Passionate about girls' education, Deanne is committed to the provision of strong learning foundations and the personal capabilities girls need to engage effectively in our increasingly complex world. She believes strongly in building confidence, developing ambition and challenging gender assumptions. She considers it an honour to contribute to Girls' Grammar's 127 year history of encouraging and empowering girls to pursue their aspirations without limitations.

As a former boarding house parent who has worked in three Queensland boarding schools, Deanne understands the vital role boarding schools play in ensuring rural and regional children receive compassion, understanding and every opportunity to thrive and succeed.

St Patrick's College Townsville

St Patrick's College Townsville is delighted to announce that Mrs Amber Hauff has been appointed Principal from 2020. With a teaching career spanning 20 years in schools including St Joseph's Nudgee College, Clayfield College and All Saints Anglican School on the Gold Coast, Amber has demonstrated a high level of competence and capacity across all dimensions of College life. Amber is a strong leader with a comprehensive grasp of the requirements of conducting a safe and secure environment that fosters growth within a supportive community.



Mrs Amber Hauff
Principal
St Patrick's College,
Townsville, QLD

She is a woman of great passion and integrity and brings with her an optimism and zest for life. Amber is deeply imbued with the Mercy spirit, and has a great love for the College, and for all within it. "The opportunity to lead such a dynamic and joy-filled community is both an honour and a privilege," said Amber, "and I am committed to ensuring the College continues to grow and flourish."

New Principals

St Stanislaus College Bathurst

Lindsay is an experienced educational leader across Catholic primary and secondary schools. Lindsay has held leadership positions as Principal of Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School and St John's Catholic College, Darwin. He also has experience as Deputy Director of Catholic Education Darwin responsible for leading finance, ICT, projects and agreements, human resources and infrastructure.



Mr Lindsay Luck
Head of College
St Stanislaus College,
Bathurst, NSW

Lindsay holds a range of education, religious education and leadership qualifications and is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Notre Dame Australia. Lindsay commenced as Head of College at St Stanislaus College Bathurst, a Catholic day and boarding school for boys, in January 2020.

Wesley College Melbourne

In July 2019, Wesley College welcomed Mr Nick Evans as the 17th Principal of the College. Previously Deputy Headmaster and Head of Senior School at Melbourne Grammar School, Nick returned to Wesley where he was a student and, for more than 20 years, a teacher and school leader.



Mr Nick Evans
Principal
Wesley College,
Melbourne, VIC

"I have experienced life at Wesley from a variety of perspectives, and I'm delighted to return to this inclusive community, which remains true to its progressive values," Nick says. "The College has gone from strength to strength since my days as a student there, creating an incredible and enduring culture of acceptance, diversity and respect".

'The return of boarding through Wesley's Learning in Residence boarding facility has undoubtedly contributed to the school's culture and community – bringing together students from across Australia and around the world to live, learn and grow together'.

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New Heads of Boarding

Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School Bunbury

Mr Justin Forbes commenced as the new Head of Boarding at Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School in January 2020.

Justin has been teaching for the past 18 years and has held positions as Head of Department and Head of House. His specialist teaching area is Chemistry and Justin holds a Graduate Diploma in Educational Leadership and Financial Management. He spent three years in boarding at Hale School, Perth and is looking forward to returning to a boarding role.

Justin values being part of a positive boarding community and developing strong connections with boarding families. His focus will be to provide a safe and dynamic environment for Boarders, while helping to develop facilities that will service the Boarding community for the next 20 years.

Justin is joined on campus by his family, including his wife and three daughters, who will attend the School. The family is excited to be living on the beautiful grounds of the School and having access to the wonderful locations in the South West of Western Australia.



Mr Justin Forbes
Head of Boarding
Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School,
Bunbury, WA

Canberra Grammar School Canberra

Jenny joined CGS in 2019, and has taken the role of Head of Girls' Boarding. In her early career, she enjoyed working as a PDHPE teacher and Head of Sport before taking up as a role of Head of House and focusing on student well-being. Jenny has a passion for building relationships and promoting young people to become independent, capable citizens who are ready for the world. She believes in encouraging all under her care to strive for personal fulfilment and has a strong desire to lead her staff in supporting the aspirations of all students while developing them into happy and confident people.

Jenny had two sons who attended CGS and she is joined by her husband, living on campus, who helps to transport the boarders to various activities around Canberra.



Mrs Jenny Hunter
Head of Girls' Boarding
Canberra Grammar School,
Canberra, ACT

Canberra Grammar School Canberra

Joining CGS in 2020 as the Head of Boys' Boarding, Kiel brings a strong set of skills developed from working as a psychologist, with the past five years working in an educational setting. Prior to this, he worked in homeless transitional support services and was a member of the Australian Men's Hockey Team for almost a decade. Kiel is passionate about working with young people in the residential education setting, and his philosophy on boarding centres on creating an environment where every student feels safe, valued and connected, and is provided developmentally appropriate opportunities to explore themselves and their world.

He is joined on campus by his wife Jessica and three young sons, Taylor, Finlay and Lennox, who are particularly excited to get to know the students and families of the CGS Boarding community.



Mr Kiel Brown
Head of Boys' Boarding
Canberra Grammar School,
Canberra, ACT

New Heads of Boarding

Djarragun College Gordonvale

Noela Millican joined Djarragun College in Term 4, 2017 as the Assistant Head of Girls' Boarding, having been involved in boys' boarding at Columba Catholic College for well over 23 years. Noela's career in boarding spans more than 25 years and in January 2020 she commenced as Head of Boarding at Djarragun College, overseeing the boys' and girls' boarding houses.

Noela has developed lasting relationships with families and boarders over her years looking after thousands of young men and women across the top end of Australia. She is a familiar face and many past students, and their families continue to remain in contact with Noela, or 'mum'.

At Djarragun, Noela has already led the development of a successful girls' boarding program, by focusing on the development of harmonious relationships with high expectations. She is well-respected by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and is welcomed into communities across regional and remote communities when she visits.



Mrs Noela Millican
Head of Boarding
Djarragun College,
Gordonvale, QLD

Guildford Grammar School Perth

Mrs Sophie Carroll was appointed the Head of Girls' Boarding at Guildford Grammar School and commenced in the role in January 2020.

Early in her career Sophie was a Senior Pastoral Mentor and Teacher of Media Production and Analysis and English.

Sophie has been a part of the Guildford Grammar School boarding community as a supervisor since 2011, taking up the leadership position of a Year Coordinator in 2015.

As a passionate advocate of holistic education, Sophie's focus this year is on the School's historic transition to a fully co-educational boarding community, building a positive, co-educational residential space where boarders can enjoy a home-like residential space that enables them to flourish and achieving their own version of success.



Mrs Sophie Carroll
Head of Girls' Boarding
Guildford Grammar School,
Perth, WA

Haileybury Rendall School Darwin

Vivienne Desmarchelier was newly appointed in 2020 as Head of Boarding and member of the school executive team at Haileybury Rendall School, Darwin. With qualifications in Education, Pastoral Care, Wellbeing and Community Services she brings a depth, compassion and richness to her work with Indigenous and non-Indigenous students alike in the care of the team she leads – where 'Every student matters every day'. Her wealth of life experience working alongside students and staff in residential settings holds her in good stead as she continues to support the next stage of this new venture for the school.

The opportunity to develop a culturally safe, social and emotional learning environment that is respectful of the thirty different remote indigenous communities represented in the boarding cohort is both an adventure and genuine privilege in which to engage. "No day is ever the same, except to say you always have a positive moment of exchange that puts a smile on your face. As we support our students learning to walk in two worlds, as staff our hearts only get stronger in admiration of their courage to learn and be their best."

Vivienne enticed her family to Darwin, the land of monsoon, heat and crocs having left Wesley College at Clunes after a long association with the development of their residential program where she was on the leadership team as Head of Welfare and an integral part of the wider community of Central Victoria.



Mrs Vivienne Desmarchelier
Head of Boarding
Haileybury Rendall School,
Darwin, NT



New Heads of Boarding

Ipswich Girls' Grammar School Ipswich

Ipswich Girls' Grammar School including Ipswich Junior Grammar School warmly welcomed Mrs Suzanne Coulter as the new Head of Boarding in January 2020.

Mrs Coulter has held senior positions in residential management. She has been the Director/Head of Boarding in two well-known Queensland girls boarding schools and the Director of Residential Services at The International School of Macau.

Mrs Coulter has completed the Australian Boarding Schools Association's Duty of Care Certificate Course in Residential Care, a Senior Administration in Care and Supervision in Residential Institutions Course at James Cook University, an Advanced Certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language/Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, Certificate IV Property Services, Certificate in Youth Mental Health at the University of Melbourne, and a Mediation Certificate at the Queensland University of Technology. Mrs Coulter has participated in a Study Tour of Northern Territory Remote Residential Schools and Colleges.

Mrs Coulter has the knowledge, experience, passion and warmth for boarding students, staff and boarding. Her leadership, management, achievements and care for boarding students, their families and staff will ensure the boarding house continues to offer a vibrant, multi-cultural community, with both international students and girls from around Australia calling IGGS boarding home.

Launceston Church Grammar School Launceston

Head of Boarding at Launceston Church Grammar School, Victoria Small, has a passion for working with young people in residential education settings.

Victoria began at the Tasmanian-based Anglican school as Acting Head of Boarding in Term 4 2019 and has recently been appointed permanently to the role. She brings extensive boarding experience having worked at Ascham, Pymble Ladies College and Abbotsleigh in Sydney. Victoria is a registered teacher, specialising in Food Studies and Christian Studies.

Bringing a fresh perspective to the role, Victoria is looking to introduce pastoral and wellbeing programs into the boarding community which provide opportunity for boarders to grow and develop into inspirational learners and leaders.

"It is important that our boarders are supported and inspired in all aspects of their growth; personally, spiritually and academically, and the programmes I am looking to introduce will endeavour to do this," says Victoria.

"Providing excellent role models as they grow and develop, are a number of families who reside within the grounds of the school including our Headmaster, Mr Richard Ford and his family. This ensures that there are many people on hand within the community to nurture and inspire our boarders."

On a personal note, having moved to Tasmania in 2019, Victoria and her family are looking forward to exploring more of the island state.



Mrs Suzanne Coulter
Head of Boarding
Ipswich Girls' Grammar School,
Ipswich, QLD



Mrs Victoria Small
Head of Boarding
Launceston Church Grammar
School,
Launceston, TAS



Ms Rachel Hentschke
Director of Boarding
Loreto College,
Adelaide, SA

Rachel Hentschke brings experience in Education and Communications to her role as Director of Boarding at Loreto College. With a passion for pastoral care and building resilience and self-esteem in young women, Rachel is thrilled to be working with the boarders from Years 7-12.

Having lived in the South East and Riverland regions of South Australia as well as in Melbourne and Adelaide, Rachel understands the lifestyle and needs of Loreto's rural and interstate boarders and their families.

Loreto College Adelaide

New Heads of Boarding

Marist College Ashgrove Brisbane

Marist College Ashgrove is pleased to introduce James Couper, our new Head of Boarding.

James has been teaching for the past 18 years. He has held previous positions in the day school as a primary and secondary teacher and as the Acting Head of Sport. James' experience in boarding totals 17 years. He has coordinated residences across all year levels for over a decade and for the last 9 years has been the Assistant Head of Boarding at Marist College Ashgrove.

"I view a positive boarding community as the backbone of the College. I see my main focus as continuing to improve the good standing of boarding at Marist College Ashgrove as well as facilitating an inclusive and dynamic environment that enables all boarders to develop holistically and achieve their personal best."

James is looking forward to seeing the impact of the newly developed whole-boarding well-being, pastoral care and life-skills program.



Mr James Couper
Head of Boarding
Marist College Ashgrove,
Brisbane, QLD

Melbourne Girls Grammar Melbourne

Director of Boarding, Amanda Haggie, is a trained teacher with experience as a Facilitator and Trainer in both the education and health sectors. She has worked in the area of mental health and wellbeing, health promotion and has also had experience working with students with learning and behavioural difficulties.

Amanda's focus in the last ten years has been in boarding schools in both New Zealand and Australia. She was most recently the Director of Boarding at St Hilda's Collegiate in Dunedin, NZ; home to 150 boarders. Upon emigrating to Melbourne with her family, Amanda has spent the last two years in a Head of Boarding role at the Melbourne Indigenous Transition School (MITS). She comes to Melbourne Girls Grammar with a wealth of knowledge and experience working with adolescent girls.

Amanda strives to provide security and reassurance to families and caregivers that their daughter(s) will be nurtured and cared for as individuals in a homely environment. The girls will also be supported in their endeavours to achieve their potential through their studies, sport and cultural interests.



Mrs Amanda Haggie
Director of Boarding
Melbourne Girls Grammar,
Melbourne, VIC

Mt Erin Boarding School Wagga Wagga

John Bussenschutt is an Accredited Boarding Practitioner whose boarding career began at Scotch College - Adelaide as Head of Boarding. It was a path he chose because he was passionate as a teacher in supporting boarding students in his classes.

John's journey from Adelaide to St. Joseph's Nudgee College in Brisbane as Director of Residential Life was a considerable leap from co-education to a boys only school, a rugby culture and a larger operation in many ways. It was a call to help establish a new boarding school for

United World College and its amazing boarding programme that led John to take up the role as Director of Boarding in Maastrich, Netherlands.

John's next boarding experience was in India, proving to be exciting and at times challenging. Ten years of living and working in such a colourful, confronting and culturally different place certainly helped to broaden his experience and perspectives. As Dean of Students/Residential Life at Kodaikanal International School in Tamil Nadu and Head of Boarding at Stonehill International School in Bangalore he was able to establish modern, contemporary boarding culture including appropriate use of technology and wellbeing programmes. He was also responsible for these two schools becoming members of ABSA, organising the first ABSA Indian Boarding School Conference and implementation of REACH at Stonehill – a first for India at the time.

John was appointed Master Teacher of Residential Life for Aga Khan Academies in 2018 where he was responsible for establishing a new boarding precinct and providing leadership and professional development of boarding staff not only in the Hyderabad Academy but also the Academies in Maputo (Mozambique), Mombasa (Kenya) and Dakar (Bangladesh).

John has returned to Australia along with his wife Robin, to take up his new appointment as Leader of Boarding of the Kildare and Mater Dei Catholic Colleges' Mt Erin Boarding School in Wagga Wagga, New South Wales.



Mr John Bussenschutt
Head of Boarding
Mt Erin Boarding School,
Wagga Wagga, NSW



New Heads of Boarding

NEGS Armidale

Mrs Donna Garrad has been appointed the Head of Boarding at NEGS Armidale for 2020. After commencing at NEGS in 2015, Donna has had extensive experience in boarding as House Mother in both the senior and junior boarding houses which has made it a seamless transition into her role as Head of Boarding.

Donna loves seeing girls form lifelong friendships and become young women who take great pride in their school. She enjoys witnessing the transition from little girls entering a new phase of their lives knowing what wonderful opportunities lie ahead, into the Senior girls who develop exceptional leadership skills and a "big sister" approach, reflecting fondly on the time when they were once that little girl. Donna feels pride in the girls as they leave to begin a life as independent, responsible and resilient young woman of the future as they join the NEGS Alumni.

Her goal is to provide a safe, supportive and nurturing environment that focuses on a holistic approach to ensure the girls experience opportunities they never thought possible. "I love sharing a smile at the end of the day, passing the girls on campus with a happy greeting. I have the privilege of sharing in their lives and becoming an extended family member to them as they journey through their life in Boarding at NEGS", said Donna.



Mrs Donna Garrad
Head of Boarding
NEGS,
Armidale, NSW

Peace Lutheran College Cairns

Peace Lutheran College is delighted to welcome Marcus Wilkinson to the position of Head of Boarding.

Marcus and his wife Lisa have lived and worked in Perth and its regional areas for the majority of their lives and have moved to Cairns, beginning a new adventure in both the region and within a new School Community. Marcus has a Bachelor of Education and Bachelor of Arts (Education), with Majors in Physical and Outdoor Education and Minor in Science. He is currently working towards a Masters of Education and has an extensive background in co-curricular activities, in particular coaching AFL, volleyball and rowing.

Marcus spent four years at Bunbury Catholic College followed by time at Aranmore and Trinity Colleges. He moved to Aquinas College in 2006 as the Director of Residence - Pinder Boor Boarding House along with teaching responsibilities. He has held the role of Director of Senior School Physical Education and Quinlan House followed by Head of Learning Area - Physical, Health and Outdoor Education. Marcus also held the position of Acting Head of Boarding at Aquinas College. From 2015 to 2019 Marcus was the Director of Residential Life at Scotch College, an all-boys school that was home for approximately 140 boarders.

Leading a residential community is a priority in Marcus' professional journey. His vision for a healthy boarding community is to promote open, transparent and honest relationships between staff, students and parents where ultimately every person who lives, works or visits the boarding community feels like they belong to a special community within the larger school environment.



Mr Marcus Wilkinson
Head of Boarding
Peace Lutheran College,
Cairns, QLD

Prince Alfred College Adelaide

Zac Savage is the new Director of Boarding at Prince Alfred College (PAC), Adelaide. Zac comes to PAC having enjoyed an interesting and varied career. His teaching career began with one-year postings in China and Slovenia. These experiences early in his career, gave Zac a broad perspective to his teaching.

Upon returning to Adelaide, Zac spent four years teaching in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands in the far north of South Australia. This experience taught Zac a great deal about life in remote locations and the role a community plays in supporting and caring for its members. A move to Westminster School in Adelaide followed, where Zac enjoyed six years working with boarding students and their families as the Director of Boarding at the School.

Zac now looks forward to developing positive connections with boarders, parents and families in becoming a valued and integrated member of the PAC community and contribute to the life of the school.

2020 sees PAC start its first full year in their new Boarding House. With the facility at capacity and caring for 156 boys, it is sure to be an exciting and rewarding year. The boys are looking forward to working with their new Director of Boarding as they engage in the many and varied experiences a year at PAC brings.



Mr Zac Savage
Director of Boarding
Prince Alfred College,
Adelaide, SA

New Heads of Boarding

Rockhampton Girls Grammar School Rockhampton

Ms Stacey McCarthy is the new Head of Boarding at Rockhampton Girls Grammar School. Stacey has come from Assumption College Kilmore in Victoria where she was Head of Girls Boarding.

Excited to be back in Queensland, Stacey has relished her start at such a wonderful all girls' boarding school. Stacey has been charged with engaging the girls in a variety of activities. She has a passion for developing capable and confident young ladies and is eager to offer the girls a diverse boarding program to cater for the girls in her care.

Prior to working in boarding, Stacey was a primary teacher who worked in schools in Central Queensland. She is always looking for a new challenge and her experiences include working as a PE teacher, Head of Curriculum and working in Distance Education where she taught via radio.

Listening to girls, seriously listening, is vital to her role and Stacey takes pride in making this a priority in her day-to-day interactions with her girls in her care. It is important that they feel that they are being heard.



Ms Stacey McCarthy
Head of Boarding
Rockhampton Girls Grammar
School,
Rockhampton, QLD

Red Bend Catholic College Forbes

After serving in an acting role, Steve was appointed Director of Boarding in 2020. Previously he worked in Boarding for ten years and has maintained both a strong interest in, and commitment to, boarding at Red Bend. Steve is also an experienced secondary mathematics teacher and has held many pastoral care positions including House Coordinator, Student Coordinator and Director of Students & Boarders.

Over time Steve has developed a strong relationship with the Marist Brothers, is an active member of St Laurence's parish and a member of the Marist Association of St Marcellin Champagnat.

Steve and wife Sarah are enjoying family life with their 18 month old daughter, Mariah.

Looking forward, Steve is particularly keen to work closely with our boarding students and their families. The ongoing focus will be on well-being and growth, whilst providing opportunities for staff development.



Mr Steve Hooper
Director of Boarding
Red Bend Catholic College,
Forbes, NSW

Santa Maria College Perth

Santa Maria College is excited to welcome Tracy Webster back to the College as our new Head of Boarding. Tracy returns to us after two years as Dean of Student Wellbeing at St Hilda's Anglican School.

Tracy Webster shares with the boarding community her many years of experience in education, leadership and adolescent wellbeing. In the past at Santa Maria College, Tracy has held the roles of Head of Middle School, Head of Enrichment and Dean of Students. She also held the role of Acting Head of Boarding for two years.

Tracy is best known for her passion for supporting the social and emotional development of students. She is loved by the girls at Santa Maria for being a nurturing, gentle influence who adds humour and lightness to their daily lives and strength in their time of need.

Moving forward, Tracy is determined to introduce innovative approaches to growing leadership in students and developing their connection to boarding. She has already introduced eight student committees to increase the girls' participation in the decision making and leadership of the community. She is also committed to encouraging independence and initiative in the girls so that they reap all of the benefits of living and studying in Perth.



Mrs Tracy Webster
Head of Boarding
Santa Maria College,
Perth, WA



New Heads of Boarding

Somerville House Brisbane

Somerville House is honoured to welcome Mrs Frances Greene to the School as the new Head of Boarding, commencing in January 2020.

Frances has spent approximately 15 years working in the education sector in both Australia and the Republic of Ireland and has specialised in teaching language across a range of contexts and residential settings.

Most recently, Frances was the Director of Student Experience at Duchesne Residential College, which is located at The University of Queensland (UQ), St Lucia campus. In this role, she oversaw the pastoral care of approximately 200 young women residing in the Sacred Heart College and enrolled in undergraduate programs across several Brisbane universities. Frances completed a Master of Educational Studies (Guidance and Counselling) at the University of Queensland while working as an academic tutor in the School of Education.

Subsequent positions included teacher of French at Moreton Bay College and Career Counsellor at Sheldon College.

Frances is originally from County Antrim in Northern Ireland, where she attended St Louis Grammar School. During her schooling, she was very fortunate to be a scholarship recipient to study a language at a residential college in County Donegal every year during the holiday season. At the age of 19, she became a residential supervisor and teacher at the same college. Frances is committed to the education and pastoral care of young women and is specifically passionate about the deeply embedded feelings of pride and belonging in boarding communities.



Mrs Frances Greene
Head of Boarding
Somerville House,
Brisbane, QLD

Scots All Saints College Bathurst

It is with great honour that I take up the position as Director of Boarding and member of the Senior Management Team at Scots All Saints College Bathurst. It is an exciting time in the history of the College after the recent amalgamation of two schools with a long boarding tradition, Scots College Bathurst and All Saints College Bathurst.

The core of a successful and meaningful boarding environment has to centre on a cohesive community which is at the school's heart. It is one where the school sees boarding as an essential component in its fabric and culture ensuring that its promotion and development are priorities. It is often the culture created in boarding that permeates the rest of the school. Within a positive boarding community, people come first and must feel respected and valued.

I have had extensive boarding experience both in the NSW Central West and in the UK, all of which have been co-educational. I have undertaken the Leadership and Wellbeing courses offered through the National Excellence in School Leadership Initiative (NESLI) in partnership with Melbourne University and I have recently completed a Masters of Leadership at Monash University.

My passions lie in education, boarding, pastoral care, wellbeing, leadership and physical activity. I have a desire to see students achieve success academically, develop on a social, emotional, moral and spiritual level and to inspire an understanding of the world so that they might enjoy meaningful and fulfilling lives.



Mr Anthony Le Couteur
Director of Boarding
Scots All Saints College,
Bathurst, NSW

St Patrick's College Townsville

With over 20 years' experience in education, having held a variety of academic and pastoral roles in secondary schools across Queensland, Megan Christie represents a positive, strong role model for St Patrick's College girls and leads by example. The College is excited to announce that Megan will continue her role as Director of Boarding in 2020.

Megan works closely with a caring and nurturing boarding team to deliver a welcoming, inclusive and supportive environment. St Patrick's College Townsville's boarding and pastoral care focus is based on a positive psychology approach – the science of human flourishing. With a commitment to student well-being, our boarding team, pastoral leaders and teachers support our boarders to make good, healthy choices and to develop self-respect and respect for others. Megan and her team are committed to ensuring that boarding at St Patrick's College Townsville is a happy and fulfilling experience for your daughter, providing a 'home away from home' environment.



Ms Megan Christie
Director of Boarding
St Patrick's College,
Townsville, QLD

New Heads of Boarding

St Ursula's College Toowoomba

Deborah Stanley was appointed to the Head of Boarding position in 2019 at St Ursula's College, Toowoomba. Deborah's background includes a number of years living abroad in China, working as the Director of Studies and teaching English. Deborah has also spent a number of years working in the Legal Industry, working in the areas of Family Law and Child Protection.

Deborah has worked with students in residential education and care for the last ten years in a number of schools throughout Queensland, working with young people and helping them develop life skills not only for their time spent in residential care, but that will also help them move towards a successful future. Deborah is dedicated and enthusiastic about working with students in residential settings, a role she developed a passion for after her own experiences in residential care, following in the footsteps of the dedicated staff that cared for her. Deborah is enjoying St Ursula's and the wonderful welcoming community; and getting to know the students and their families.



Mrs Deborah Stanley
Head of Boarding
St Ursula's College,
Toowoomba, QLD

Tec-NQ Beachside Townsville

Tec-NQ Beachside, Tec-NQ's boarding facility, welcomes Renz Loto to the role of Head of Boarding. Renz commenced with Tec-NQ in 2012 as a trade facilitator, moving to student support in 2018.

His enthusiasm for student development led Renz to take on the role of lead facilitator for Tec-PREP, Tec-NQ's Year 10 trade immersion program in 2015. In that role, Renz organised excursions where the students measured perimeters of buildings, calculated distance and height using stair treads and applied trigonometry through observation.

"We didn't realise it at the time, but there was a lot of maths in that. It's like he's taken us on this journey. He's really developed us as a team" says former student Locke Pelling. "I have a holistic approach to the learning and development of students and young people. It incorporates formal education and a lifetime of experience".

"I believe that all young people are looking for positive guidance and acceptance as they navigate the journey through to becoming responsible adults".

Renz will oversee the ongoing development and implementation of Beachside's well being, hygiene, good health, diet and exercise programs.



Mr Renz Loto
Head of Boarding
Tec-NQ Beachside,
Townsville, QLD

Walford Anglican School for Girls Adelaide

Louise Skull has recently taken up residence at Walford Anglican School for Girls as the newly appointed Head of Boarding. Louise has over 30 years' experience working in schools and has taught Food and Hospitality, Tourism, Business Studies and English as an Additional Language. For the past 13 years Louise has worked mainly with International Programs leading marketing trips overseas and developing relationships with overseas agencies and schools. Louise has led a team of staff in the care and support of children living away from home and managing their daily welfare, social and emotional wellbeing and academic progress.

Louise is thrilled to be able to move into the boarding house and lead the girls in their journey through school. The grounds and rooms are extremely well planned and designed giving each girl access to very modern facilities and resources. The support staff are outstanding, and all highly committed to making the experience at Walford comfortable, supportive and enriching.

Louise is looking forward to a future filled with all the positive experiences that boarding can bring - joy, laughter, friendship, growth and success.



Mrs Louise Skull
Head of Boarding
Walford Anglican School
for Girls,
Adelaide, SA



New Heads of Boarding

The King's School Sydney

Ben is the newly appointed Director of Boarding at The King's School. He has over 15 years' experience in boarding and pastoral care. Ben teaches senior Economics and Business Studies and Junior Commerce and coaches Rugby, Tennis and Cricket. Ben has been an Assistant Boarding Housemaster, a Master in Charge of Sport, an Academic Year Co-ordinator, an Officer in the King's School Cadet Corps and most recently a Senior Boarding Housemaster for the last seven years. Ben is passionate about best practice pastoral care. He has introduced the Patron programme to King's boarding and has worked with the boarding team to develop the latest and well-balanced technology policy within the boarding houses. Ben has been on many rugby tours including two World Cup tours in 2007 and 2019 and has been fortunate to be part of the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Sailing expeditions to New Caledonia.

Ben sees the boarding environment at King's as a home away from home where he and the wonderfully supportive and highly qualified staff strive to make it a safe, enjoyable and academic learning environment for all, where the boys feel valued and encouraged to develop their individual talents and interests. Ben believes the boarding experience should be based on the boys discussing, learning about and putting into practice The King's School Values of honesty, humility and respect, a responsibility for self with actions and words, a sense of place and understanding of opportunities available to the boys and an appreciation of them, compassion, empathy and understanding in our dealings with others and from this foundation they will nurture integrity, compassion, and a true sense of humility and place.

Ben's wife, Dimity, and their three children Matilda, Harry, and Polly are an unwavering support, both for him and the boarding community and Harry is a proud Kingsman starting in the prep in 2016.



Mr Ben Chadwick
Director of Boarding
The King's School,
Sydney, NSW

Westminster School Adelaide

Andrew has come from Haileybury Rendall School in Darwin where he was the Head of Boarding for the past two years. He restructured their boarding program to meet and exceed ABSA National Standards and best practice ideology. Prior to this, Andrew was the Head of Middle School Boarding at The Armidale School in NSW, for four years.

A former boarder himself (Newington College), Andrew has extensive coeducational wellbeing and pastoral care experience in both school and boarding contexts. He is a qualified teacher in the secondary subjects of Economics and Geography and has held appointments as a Housemaster and Senior Boarding staff member at various times in his career. His co-curricular and community sporting interests include cricket, Rugby Union and cultural tours.

Andrew is excited about the professional opportunities that Westminster presents and appreciative of the wonderfully warm welcome that has been extended by the School's vibrant community.



Mr Andrew Junge
Director of Boarding
Head of Boys' Boarding
Westminster School,
Adelaide, SA

Westminster School Adelaide

Kate joins Westminster School from Tenison Woods College in Mount Gambier, South Australia, where she was the Years 8 to 12 Sport Coordinator and High-Performance Sports Program Coordinator. Having grown up in Adelaide, Kate spent many years living and working in regional SA. With significant experience and qualifications in pastoral care, Kate has also worked as a Youth Worker/Behavior Assistant in schools and DECD.

Kate and her family are a great fit for Westminster with their love of sport and activities, as well as being very community minded.



Ms Kate Exelby
Head of Girls' Boarding
Westminster School,
Adelaide, SA

From the Chair



Pauline Turner
Chair

Welcome to the first edition of 'Lights Out' for 2020. A new decade awaits us as we continue to support the work of educators and staff in the world of Boarding Schools and Communities. Lights Out has wonderful rich articles to encourage and inform readers throughout the year - with the desire to enable readers to expand understanding and best practice by improving on what is already an outstanding publication worldwide.

In this first edition for the year you will have met many of the new leaders in Boarding Schools across the country and internationally. We welcome all those who have taken on new roles and embraced the challenges and joys of working in this growing and dynamic field of education. In the pages of each edition you will read about current exciting new practice as well as broader information related to enhancing the lives and workplaces of both staff and students. Many of our Association Partners will be published throughout the year with information about their products on offer. Our partners are always keen to hear from boarding staff and schools.

If you are keen to write an article yourself related to the work you are doing in boarding please let our office know as this is a publication for the enrichment of all in the industry - so go ahead and share your knowledge. The sharing of knowledge is priceless and helps make 'Lights Out' an invaluable resource for boarding staff. I look forward to reading about your new ideas and how they have impacted the community at your school.

The best way to ensure your staff are staying abreast of the possibilities on offer from ABSA is to enrol in as many of the ABSA professional development courses, workshops and activities as possible. By the time you read this editorial everyone will have received the ABSA Calendar for 2020. You can see for yourself the wealth of activities on offer in State regions. This year is ABSA's International Conference in Fremantle WA, so make sure you plan ahead and register early. Having opportunity to network with colleagues can produce invaluable information for you to take into your school. The offerings of the ABSA team are not limited, do not hesitate to email or call for assistance or professional support they are always glad to be of service to our member schools.

From all the team and the Board Members of ABSA, we wish you a happy, successful 2020 and hope to hear of your good work through the year.

UNLOCK THE POTENTIAL

TOPICS INCLUDE:
The Future of Boarding Schools
New Wave Marketing for your Boarding School
The Biggest Risk of Boarding
Boarding Staff Welfare

ABSA International Conference 2020
27th - 30th September • Fremantle WA

AUSTRALIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION
CREATING THE FUTURE FOR BOARDING SCHOOLS

Coming Events

AUS

Visit www.boarding.org/our-events to see upcoming Duty of Care Workshops.

17 - 23 May 2020
National Boarding Week



27 - 30 September 2020
ABSA International Boarding Conference, Fremantle

USA

14-17 June 2020
TABS Marketing Retreat

25-27 June 2020
TABS Heads Retreat

July 2020
TABS Summer Sessions

3-5 December
TABS Annual Conference, Washington DC

UK

1-2 April 2020
BSA Annual Conference for Boarding House Staff, Brighton

5-6 May 2020
BSA Heads Conference, Edinburgh

NZ

25 - 29 May 2020
NZBSA National Hui, Queenstown

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Download this issue from the ABSA website:
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Would You Like Your Boarding School Featured in Lights Out?

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

Send all files to:
absa@boarding.org.au
by 1st May 2020

Photo taken by a Year 12 boarder Georgia Ditchfield in 2019. In its second year, the Boarder Photography Competition has received some impressive photographs. The theme of the Competition in 2019 was 'Action'. Boarders were asked to share a photo taken at their family property that captured the theme. Georgia won 1st prize for this photo.



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