

# Lights Out

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## Investing in the Future of Boarding



AUSTRALIAN  
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New Girls Boarding Recreation Centre, Kinross Woleroi School, Orange, NSW

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## How Many Staff are Needed?

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**“It is important to remember that it is about taking the steps that are reasonable to minimise the risk of fore-seeable injury.”**

We have been requested to make some comments in relation to the issue, understandably of concern to both decision-making staff and implementing staff, of how many staff need to be on duty in different situations. Unfortunately, this question, as with the meaning in particular circumstances of ‘what is reasonable’, cannot be answered with great precision, but there are a number of things we can say which may be of assistance.

First, in applying the general duty of care it is important to remember that it is about taking the steps that are reasonable to minimise the risk of foreseeable injury. In determining what is appropriate, one looks at a vast range of issues such as the details of the situation, risk factors, the age, maturity, and behaviour patterns of the students in question, the resources that are available, and balancing the two considerations of risk minimisation and giving students, particularly as they become older, the opportunity to accept responsibility for themselves (in a manner consistent with the duty of care being implemented). From the supervisor’s perspective, there is a need to consider what resources should be made available. This can be a difficult decision to make in the context of the operation of a boarding house, but if the supervising decision-maker feels that the resources are inadequate, there will clearly be a duty to alert the management to whom the supervisor reports so that the matter can be reviewed. Similarly, staff at the ‘pointy end’ who are implementing the relevant supervision should raise with their supervisor or with management concerns that they have. The provision of information, when there may be unacceptable risks, is an obvious duty which can be discharged with minimum time and effort but may have significant impact.



# How Many Staff are Needed?

Secondly, consultation and collegiate decision-making can produce (and demonstrate) careful, informed outcomes.

Thirdly, there are a number of contexts in which there may be specific provisions. For example, there may be provisions in relation to transport regarding maximum number of persons who can be in a vehicle (which goes to staff/student ratio as, if a second vehicle is needed, for that reason then obviously a second staff member is needed to be in the second vehicle). Workplace health and safety legislation, particularly codes of practice, may have some specific requirements which are imposed by law. That is a matter which will vary across jurisdictions. Fire and emergency laws may be relevant. Sporting association protocols may assist.

In many States and Territories, there already exist mandated standards. These should be examined, not only to ascertain whether numbers are included, but as to whether the mandated standards are relevant to assessing what staff ratio is appropriate. Simi-

larly, the draft boarding standard (accessible on the ABSA website) has relevant principles, such as 3.4(e) relating to the need for 'an accredited and capable person available at all times who can administer and manage' certain medical issues.

Finally, (and somewhat sadly), numbers are sometimes recommended by Coroners in inquests resulting out of tragic situations, such as drownings in pools or on excursions.

It is important in such situations to err on the side of caution and to be part of 'the mainstream'. Conversations with peers in other boarding schools or at conferences of boarding school staff and discussion within the school boarding house are all of assistance in developing approaches which will be supportable in the event of criticism in that the person who has made a decision about numbers can show that they have considered the issues, and consulted appropriately, and that their general approach is consistent with that of the boarding school community generally.



## ARE YOU ON BOARD?

### AUGUST 2015

Register online at: <http://www.boarding.org.au/2025/conferences/2015-leaders-symposium/>



## History Still Resonates A Century Later

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Eight boarders were amongst twenty Prince Alfred College students and three Boarding staff chaperones who just returned from an epic journey that encompassed a fascinating exploration of battlefields, monuments, interpretation centres and historic landmarks from Turkey to France and Belgium. The 2015 PAC Battlefield History tour was a great success with boys bringing back many memories, souvenirs and colourful tales to share with families and friends. Of course the experience was particularly poignant for our country students who often have close links to the original ANZACs with many relishing the opportunity to travel overseas and investigate their nation's history in this way.

Our first port of call was the ancient city of Istanbul, a bustling, bewildering hub catering to 17 million inhabitants. Our Turkish guide touched on the vast history associated with this region dating back to the Bronze-age Hittites and Assyrians, Alexander the Great, the Romans through the Byzantine era followed by the Ottoman Empire to the present. Despite this impressive history, quite palpable to the group through ancient ruins on streets, roads built through Roman aqueducts and the awe inspiring Blue Mosque, the Turks actually see the Gallipoli battle as a pivotal part of their national story. It is a key reason why Australians are so welcome in this land which was once enemy territory.

This warm Turkish reception was undeniable when we visited a local high school in Eceabat and the boys were treated like movie

stars! The hotly contested game of basketball was followed by a charming international exchange of chocolates and stickers (and Facebook profiles). Meanwhile staff discussed contemporary pedagogical matters drawing comparisons between Australian and Turkish curricula. The concept of Boarding schools, whilst a little alien to Turks, does exist here through special Science based schools where gifted students are invited from all over Turkey to live on campus in special, well resourced, Science Academies.

The Gallipoli leg of the tour was profound! From our first investigation of the beaches along ANZAC Cove, the boys were captivated as they contemplated exactly what had happened here 100 years ago. Certainly looking up from the rocky beach to 'the Sphinx' and Shrapnel gully made for some sombre and thought provoking reflection.

We started our ANZAC tributes here with boarder, Brady Miell recounting the incredible story of his two forbears – one his Great Grandfather and the other his Great-Great Grandfather - who may not have known each other but were buried next to each other at Ari Burnu! A generation later, their descendants would inter-marry and create an amazing link between the two soldiers.

Some passionate and sincere Old Scholar tributes were offered at Beach cemetery and Lone Pine, then inspections of the Nek battlefield, the Turkish positions at Chunik Bair and the remains of trenches through here, all





# History Still Resonates A Century Later



captured our imaginations. A solemn tribute to VC winner, and perhaps the most famous PAC Old Scholar, Hugo Throssell, (a boarding student himself over 100 years ago) was delivered by Lochie Delbridge and Stewie Harris only metres from where he carried out his incredible acts of valour.

Paris was our next destination where the boys were given a brief dissertation on the French Revolution, then walked it! From the place de la Bastille, along the Seine to Notre Dame and the Louvre, into the Tuileries gardens we then looked out at the place de la Concorde where thousands were guillotined during the French Revolution including Louis XVI and his wife, Marie Antoinette. An Eiffel tower climb and a cruise along the Seine finished an eventful day. (Fitbit calculated we all walked 14.6km that day!)

Another sunny day in Paris saw us head onto the Metro which some tired legs welcomed. Inspecting the decadent glory of the extraordinary Palace of Versailles allowed the boys to understand the origins of the French Revolution much better than any History book or documentary film could. Mitchell Smith mentioned that the new PAC Boarding House could be modelled on this structure.

The boys were quickly brought back to the Great War theme, with our journey through

## “ANZAC Tributes”

the Somme valley where we investigated the tragic battle of Fromelles. Over 2000 young Australians lost their lives here in just over 24 hours! An infamous German corporal, Adolf Hitler was involved in this battle too. A number of boys discovered bits of shrapnel and bullet casings on this battlefield before we bunked down in Lille for the night.

The Menin Gate ceremony at Ypres has been held at 8pm every single night, 365 days a year – since the 1920s! It was here boarders Lachy Zanker and Braiden Ousey marched up to leave a wreath from the PAC community. The Ypres museum, In Flanders Fields, offered a poignant look at the horrors of war and how this town had been devastated by it. That night Ray Brown read John McCrae’s famous poem by the same name.

The final stage of our tour took us to Villers Bretonneux for the dawn service on ANZAC Day. The group were all up at 2am to get to the service on time with around 6000 Australians participating. Appropriately the rain came down on this chilly April morning but

the words and images were quite inspirational for us all. Ray Brown and Tom Geyer were given the duty of laying a PAC Community wreath during the ceremony. Later that afternoon, we noticed an Aussie rules game taking place and we visited the VB school there where the sign, DO NOT FORGET AUSTRALIA has remained for many years.

It is certainly worth noting how easily the boarding students in this tour group adapted to the trials and tribulations of international travel. They were often the most organised, punctual and well prepared, adapting to communal life and room sharing (albeit in hotels) more easily than the day students. Perhaps most pleasing of all though was the way boarders and day students got on so well together throughout the trip. Certainly the spirit and sense of adventure evident amongst this whole group of boys was quite impressive at times.

The long journey home was a time for reflection and deep contemplation for us all. Studying, living and breathing history tends to do that. The boys had a wonderful experience with many stories to tell and photos to share. Thanks must go to staff – Mr Darren Roylett (PAC Head of Boarding) and Ms Anna Thomson (PAC Boarding House Nurse and RA) who made an invaluable contribution to the success of this study tour.

## To Listen & To Hear

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With the National Boarding Standard for Australian Schools having progressed through the draft and consultation phase, what does the future hold for 'residential communities' and specifically what can we learn from the experience of boarding schools in the United Kingdom who have experienced similar developments?

It is now in excess of a decade since standards were introduced in the UK and to a large extent they drive and determine the nature of boarding schools. However, we need to recognise the National Minimum Standards (NMS) in the UK are not an industry generated guide to best practice but are legally enforceable expectations for each and every school that has residential students. In extreme circumstances, if the standards are not met, they can threaten the existence of boarding at that school. That is not to say that there are not legally enforceable standards for Australia. However, those that do exist vary according to state and territory, and are separate from the National Boarding Standard for Australian Schools.

The circumstances and context for the introduction of standards in Australia and the UK also differ significantly. The advent of the NMS in the former owes more to the introduction of safeguards for young people with regards to residential living than it does to the goal of excellence for those who live at school. As a consequence, the fact that standards must cover a variety of different settings and care situations, has resulted in schools having to implement and respond to significant legislation that invariably has had to be adapted to a school setting. Thus, where a house or boarding school previously offered an induction programme for new students, now it has to be documented, and will invariably require

a whole host of literature for parents, guardians and their wards. The nature of contact with parents has been standardised, and indeed the access of adults to the house is now routinely monitored. Schools are now duty bound to offer an equality of opportunities to students to a variety of study and activity arrangements. There is of course validity and rationale for all of the above but equally when the core role of the Houseparent or Supervisor is to care for the students it can feel much more about recording what has, or indeed will happen, rather than creating a 'home away from home' for adolescent children in their formative years.

That said, the advent of standards has brought about some important enhancements to the daily operation of the traditional house. Possibly the most notable development has been the concept of listening to the views of students. The NMS has identified that students must be able to express their views and that in turn they must be heard, or indeed considered, when it comes to how the house runs and operates on a daily basis. The challenge of course is how to enable this to happen, how to encourage students to express their views, and then to respond suitably to the observations and suggestions being made.

One of the changes I implemented in my former role, as both a Housemaster and as the Head of Boarding to a community of over 300 residential students at Dean Close School in Cheltenham, England, was to establish a suitable medium for students to express their thoughts, and to create a culture where they felt able to share their views. The solution I introduced at Dean Close was to initiate a House Forum, effectively a meeting of twelve students, with two representatives from each of the five year groups in the house. Ideally, there would always be one or two suggestions that could be easily met and no forum would ever be complete without a request for either more or less brown bread. However, ensuring that at least some needs were met, particularly during the first few meetings, was integral to the long term success of the initiative.

In contrast to Dean Close, boarding at Gippsland Grammar is a much more bespoke experience, tailored to the needs of students that desire opportunities for further study and tutoring. However, whilst the rationale for boarding may be different to Dean Close,





## To Listen & To Hear

**“The advent of standards has brought about some important enhancements”**

when one looks deeper there are significant parallels between the two schools. Students have the same needs, offer the same challenges, and the privilege and rewards of leading a boarding community are identical. I have been surprised but equally delighted to find an established medium to harness the views of the students through a regular meeting known as the ‘Boarders’ Voice’: being able to build on an established foundation in order to enhance the family atmosphere has been hugely encouraging.

The Boarders’ Voice meeting at Blackwood House involves an elected group of students. The essential structure of the meetings, and indeed the objective of such, is the same as I have become accustomed to in the UK. For the students they have an opportunity to voice their opinions: they know that what they offer to the forum will be respected and, where feasible, will be used to develop and enhance the house. Thus far into my new role, small changes such as the appointment of new academic tutors, the addition of smoothies to the afternoon tea menu and the pruning of courtyard trees has identified to the students that there is purpose to the process, and this has encouraged them in their efforts.

Allowing the voice of the students to be heard is however much more than simply a regular meeting. Where there has been a cultural change, and where students are encouraged

to contribute, then we can see the development of a true community. This may prove in some ways to be a never ending challenge, but experience has shown that creating a network of platforms and pathways for feedback is key. The voice of the boarder can be heard by many and the tutor, supervisor, cleaner and cook, for example, all have a role to play. When empowered and enabled, they can become vital means of communication for the students in the feedback they offer during the course of their day. If at the end of the day we truly believe that we are creating ‘a home away from home’, then we must allow the boarders their voice. The challenge is to work out what works for your school and how to create a culture where the views of students are valued.

What can we therefore take for the experience of UK boarding schools in the wake of the introduction of the NMS? We can certainly look forward to a degree of adaptation and development as we embrace the inevitable change the standards will bring. In some quarters they may well be disquiet and questioning of some of the new ways that have to be introduced. However, the potential of developments such as hearing the voice of the boarder, tells us to look forward with both an open mind and indeed with positivity about the potential of standards to both enhance and improve the experience for students at our respective schools.



# MLC Perth

BY LAPG EDUCATION



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The boarders came back from their term 1 break and let out screams of excitement to see that they had a new dining room to enjoy breakfast, lunch and dinner from. Greeting them, upon entry, is a new black stone servery with mirror imaged heating stones, gantry's and heat lamps. In addition to this the clad cold well sits perfectly adjacent to the hot servery. Our focus on batch cooking and innovative presentation is now complemented by this new design so that the girls can enjoy a complete dining experience.

Our Smart Food Program in both the boarding and café spaces sees LAPG constantly strive to educate the boarders and day girls to make informed, smart food choices based on size, time and age appropriate eating. Whether it be a choice between organic muesli, yoghurt with chia seeds and raspberries or eggs benedict for breakfast, lemongrass green chicken curry or a homemade beef burger for lunch or a treat of homemade chocolate brownie or delicious lemon yoghurt cake the girls enjoy balanced and fresh quality options at each meal.

Surrounded by flowers, fresh fruit, wire baskets, and wooden beverage and breakfast bars the girls didn't know where to look first.

Our recently appointed Chef/Manager Naomi Cameron has added her own personal touch and passion for making a difference in this environment and, with her nutritional and wellbeing background, is focussing on every element of the food service. One of the favourite dishes is her homemade granola with a base of oats, quinoa, chia seeds and goji berries - the recipe is below for you to try out!

Naomi joined LAPG from Bunker Bay in Dunsborough, where she ran the food and beverage operations and her passion for great food and service has made her perfect for the role at Methodist Ladies College.

The new look has also been transferred into the girls café, with pops of yellow and charcoal grey bringing new life to the much loved and used facility.

**A new home  
away from home...**

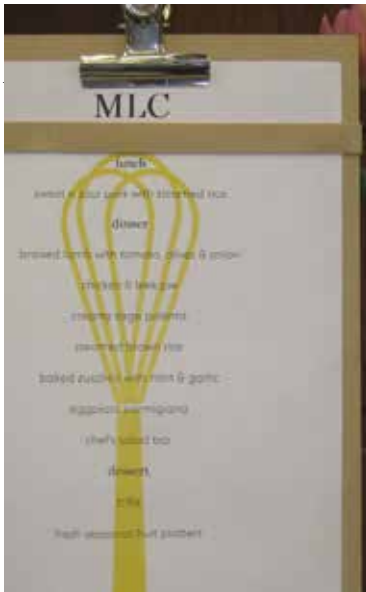
## homemade granola muesli



### ingredients

- 2 cups rolled oats
- 1 cup quinoa flakes
- 1 cup each of puffed millet/amaranth
- 1 cup pumpkin seeds
- 1 cup dried cranberries
- 1 cup goji berries





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George Michaelides  
Director, Business Development  
0404 000 931

Ian Alexander  
Manager, Business Development  
0408 790 843

- 1 cup dried coconut flakes
- 1/2 cup each sunflower, chia and flax seeds
- 1 cup chopped organic dried apricots
- Cinnamon to taste

\* To make gluten free, take out the oats

### method

Can add nuts such as almonds, walnuts and Brazil nuts for extra protein

Mix altogether and store in an air tight container.

Serve with yoghurt, and your choice of milk with fresh fruit or use it as a base for a wicked smoothie!



## The Perth College “On Board” Programme

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When I arrived at Perth College as Head of Boarding in 2009, I brought with me a passion for the journey of boarding; a belief that boarding should offer an education in its own right and not purely offer a safe place to be when students were not at school. Having spent many years as a Housemistress at Gordonstoun School in Scotland, the founder of the Round Square organisation, this personal holistic philosophy would surprise nobody, but at Gordonstoun, all the students boarded bar a handful and the journey was therefore a different dynamic than only 1/10 of the school boarding, as it is at Perth College. However, keen to build an internal programme that utilised the strengths of the boarding staff and addressed those key topics that all boarding staff address at some point, but sometimes without the structure in place, I started to compile. In 2011, the first stage of the Perth College “On Board” programme was implemented.

A feature of a Perth College boarding education is the value placed on the development of responsibility, community and challenge in addition to the key values of the School and this programme encapsulates these as well as complementing the school’s leadership programme “Inside Out”.

### Aim:

The “On Board” programme is designed to teach girls more about themselves, to develop a sense of responsibility and independence, to develop self-esteem and confidence, to appreciate and experience the ways in which they can contribute to their immediate and wider community and ultimately how to lead by example and manage senior roles of leadership in preparation for life beyond Perth College. Throughout each stage of the programme, the School’s core values of “Capable”, “Courageous” and “Caring” permeate and each course aims to be as interactive and practical as possible, led by enthusiastic and skilled members of the Boarding House team.

The themes of each year’s programme are as follows:

- Year 7/8 Myself and My Community**
- Year 9 Service**
- Year 10 Leadership and Me**
- Year 11 Mentoring**
- Year 12 Senior Roles and The Next Step**

The girls in Years 7 and 8 start their journey by a focus on community living. They meet with me once a week for the whole year and





# The Perth College “On Board” Programme



**“A practical ‘positivity’ project towards the end of the year which involves the rest of the Boarding House, rounds up the year”**

we focus on community skill acquisition, covering topics such as organisation, technology use and friendships, setting their own goals for the first term as a focus. Progressing through domestic skills such as healthy eating, sewing and social etiquette, we implement activities geared towards positive thinking towards the challenging part of the year. A practical ‘positivity’ project towards the end of the year which involves the rest of the Boarding House, rounds up the year.

In Year 9, the girls attend informative sessions from guest speakers from all sorts of voluntary organisations such as the RSPCA, SES and Women’s Refuge shelters. They are provided opportunities to work with individuals and groups in the wider community as a practical based placement after school which enables them to contribute in a very real and direct way. The girls now start to think about others, take on responsibility and are sometimes taken out of their comfort zone a little, in meeting a more diverse group of people on these placements and having to manage themselves accordingly.

The Year 10 theme of exploring Leadership is introduced initially via a residential camp. The girls are taken off campus and attend workshops on the premise of mentoring, leadership and important associated qualities. This is done in conjunction with a boys’ college and the two day venture is always a memorable annual event! Following on, the girls organise events for the junior school community and start to mentor new boarders. They are given guidance from staff through many workshops on how to manage mentoring situations and make a valuable contribution to the transition of our new boarders. In their final year, the girls learn how to lead the Boarding Community as Officials or senior prefects.

These boarding experiences complement those initiatives within the pastoral care programmes of the School and the “Inside Out” Programme, but they also give the boarding community a sense of holistic development, a sense of ambition for themselves in more diverse areas and a chance to shine out of the classroom.



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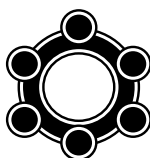


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## 3 Misconceptions Adults Have When Communicating With Young People

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**“Be flexible in your approach. If ‘telling’ the young person isn’t working, be flexible.”**

Often adults will complain that young people just don't know how to communicate anymore. If you've ever found yourself saying "I can't get through to him" or "she doesn't listen to me" then the misconceptions highlighted in this article will be of interest to you. Furthermore, if you work with young people in boarding or you have children of your own, then I think you will find these strategies to improve your communication useful.

### Misconception 1 - Not listening!

Young people will often complain that they feel unheard and that their voices aren't listened to. This is because most parents or adults are not engaged in active listening when speaking with their child or young person. Active listening is when the listener suspends all pre-conceived ideas about what the young person in front of them might be saying and instead listens to the words that are actually being said. By actively listening you begin to hear what the young person is really saying and not what you think they are saying. To begin to train yourself in active listening, practice the following three tips:

1. Make sure you are in a space to listen to the young person. If you are in the middle of doing something else, like finishing off some work, tidying up or your mind is just simply somewhere else, stop and take the time to listen. Let them know that what they are talking to you about is important. Give them the attention they deserve. If you are distracted you might miss the subtext of what they are trying to tell you.
2. Use the specific language the young per-

son uses in your responses to them. This step is very important. If they say they are feeling 'frustrated' use the word 'frustrated' back. Don't substitute in your own words as they are labels you use and may not mean the same thing to them. For example, if they say that they are feeling 'sad' don't substitute 'sad' with 'miserable'. For example if the young person says; "I feel sad", and the adult responds; "What's making you feel miserable?" Miserable may mean something very different to them and will immediately tell them that you haven't heard what they were saying. Instead a better response would be, "what is making you feel sad?" Respect their words and feed them back to them. This will tell the young person that you are actually listening to them.

3. Ask unbiased and non-judgmental questions when talking to them. Questions like, how does that make you feel? What is important about that to you? What specifically about that upsets you? These are all good questions to use in response. Try responding with these questions and substitute their language into the questions and watch how the conversation unfolds.

### Misconception 2 – Adults believing that the young person isn't actually listening to them in the first place because of how they may behave during the conversation.

We all run strategies for everything we do. We have a strategy for brushing our teeth, getting out of bed in the morning and even putting our clothes on; we run a strategy for every aspect of our daily lives. A strategy is just a sequence of actions or thoughts that





# 3 Misconceptions Adults Have When Communicating With Young People

we run in order to perform a certain function. For example, think about brushing your teeth. You will either use your left or right hand to hold your toothbrush or maybe you use a combination of both, you may run water over the brush before you put the tooth paste on, you may stand up while brushing your teeth, you may sit down, you may walk around. You run this strategy twice a day probably without even thinking about it. The strategy for how you brush your teeth is probably different to your partners, but this doesn't mean that your strategy is right or better than your partners, it is just different and it is just your

myself. But this isn't true. People listen in all different ways. For example, my husband's listening strategy is looking around the room, fiddling with things, and to an outsider he just looks distracted, but this is how he best listens. So in the past when I tried to impose my listening strategy on to him, I didn't get the best results. Instead, when I learnt to respect his listening strategy and worked with it, I got much better results.

So why am I telling you this? You need to work out what the young person you are communicating with's listening strategy is. Do they listen best when you go for a walk? Do they listen best when they are engaged in an activity? Do they listen best when they are sitting or standing? If you can work out when and how they best listen, the communication between the two of you will dramatically improve. Now you may be thinking how do I know when I've figured out their listening strategy? You will know because you will feel that the young person has really understood and heard what you have had to say and perhaps more importantly the young person will display behaviour that shows they feel they have been heard and understood too.

**Misconception 3 – Having the same conversation over and over again and being inflexible in your approach.**

Often adults will say, "but we've had this conversation so many times before..." and if you've ever said this, then the chances are you need to be more flexible in your communication approach. But what do I mean by this? We know that the best communicator is the most flexible communicator. What I mean is that if you always do the same thing, you are always going to get the same result. If you always have the same conversation in the same way with the young person in your care and it doesn't work, well you are always going to get the same result, namely the conversation not working. Be flexible in your approach. If 'telling' the young person isn't working, be flexible. Experiment with the tone of your voice, the volume, the pitch. Experiment with the words you use. Experiment with where you have those conversations – is it always in the common room, after you've told them off for having a messy bedroom? Is it always after you've had a long day? Is it always just before they go to bed? Experiment with as many different factors as you can and keep going until you get the result you desire and remember the best communicator is the most flexible communicator.

I hope by highlighting these misconceptions you are able to improve your own communication and get better results with the young people in your care.



way of brushing your teeth. Why I am writing about brushing your teeth? Well to help you understand that you also have a strategy for listening. Now in most cases you would never impose your strategy of brushing your teeth onto someone else, however people will often impose their listening strategy onto other people. For example, how I listen to a conversation is different to how someone else might listen. My listening strategy involves me making eye contact with the person I am talking to. I like to look them straight in the eye throughout the conversation. Therefore, before I embarked on my communication training I thought that if someone wasn't making eye contact with me, this meant that they weren't really listening. Now why would I think that? I thought that because I assumed everyone had the same listening strategy as



## Investing In The Future of Boarding

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**“I am excited and enthused to be part of a school that recognises the unique benefits boarders bring to a school community.”**



Kinross Wolaroi School is undergoing a period of unprecedented growth and investment in its boarding facilities. Stage 1 of a \$15 million building program has just been completed, with a new boys' boarding house and a girls' recreation centre officially opening their doors this year.

The buildings are part of a new vision for boarding at KWS, which features a number of goals for all accommodation on both the Wolaroi and PLC sites: houses capped at 50 students, rooms capped at four students, no bunks or space savers, refurbished buildings with comfortable, built-in furniture throughout. The newest boarding house has been designed as two smaller houses rather than one large facility to maintain a high staff-to-student ratio and promote the feeling of homeliness. It features high ceilings and wide walkways, king single beds, wireless

and hardwire connectivity, extra bathrooms and an abundance of natural light. Over on the girls' boarding site the purpose-built rec centre features state-of-the-art fitness equipment, music practise rooms, an all-purpose indoor court and a movie-viewing room.

The new 'bricks and mortar' however, is simply the physical manifestation of the school's deep commitment to boarding. I have worked in boarding schools for the past 25 years but I've only been at KWS for four years, so I'm still a relative newcomer. To be frank, I regularly find myself surprised – and delighted – by the commitment of Principal Brian Kennelly and the School Council to boarding.

KWS currently educates 1100 students with a ratio of boarders to day students of 45:55. There is a policy that the ratio cannot fall below 40 per cent boarding, and this





# Investing In The Future of Boarding



applies both across the school and within year groups. Demand for places at KWS is such that we could easily fill our ranks with day students and, to be honest, it would be a much more lucrative option. But Principal Kennelly and the council would not hear of sacrificing boarding places to meet that demand; KWS is a boarding school and boarding is the vital ingredient that gives KWS its 'flavour'.

This 'flavour' comes from the fact KWS has been the choice of generations of country families – brothers, sisters, mums, dads, cousins, aunts and uncles of current students have all boarded here. Over the years boarders have formed close friendships with their day student peers and spent time with their families around Orange, while hordes of day students have headed north, south and west for eye-opening holidays 'on the farm'.

Through their children, day and boarding parents have forged friendships that have lasted decades. You can't manufacture the sort of 'family' atmosphere that comes from these close bonds and shared life experiences, and from having brothers, sisters, cousins and so on, in the same school. This genuine family atmosphere is one of the reasons KWS is a true community.

My admiration for the direction the principal and the council have chosen to take the school extends to their disinterest in 'cashing in' on current day student demand by increasing overall student numbers. KWS educates 1100 students very well. It has no wish to educate 1500 students quite well.

The ideal 40:60 ratio is no accident either; it's a figure that has been reached after many years of successfully combining boarding and

day school education. Yes, boarding is at the heart of the KWS culture, but it is the academic and co-curricular success of the day school that attracts boarding families. Country families are motivated by a desire to give their children access to a quality education that will broaden their horizons and their opportunities for the future. We attract boarders because the day school provides extensive academic and co-curricular programs which cater for diverse academic needs and interests.

I am excited and enthused to be part of a school that recognises the unique benefits boarders bring to a school community. KWS has made a decision to maintain its commitment to boarding – despite the pressures to do otherwise – and it has backed that up by investing heavily in the future of boarding.





**AIEF Compendium** of best practice for achieving successful outcomes with Indigenous students in Australian boarding schools





# AIEF Compendium Shares Indigenous Education Best Practice with Boarding Schools Nationwide

AUTHOR  
Alayna Walsh  
Communication Executive  
AIEF

In May the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation (AIEF) launched a ground-breaking guide to best practice in Indigenous education, the AIEF Compendium of best practice for achieving successful outcomes with Indigenous students in Australian boarding schools.

The AIEF Compendium draws on interviews, surveys and discussions with over 160 educators at more than 50 leading Australian schools to identify the critical factors influencing successful outcomes – Year 12 completion and career transitions – among Indigenous boarding students.

The result is a practical guide intended to assist schools to establish a successful Indigenous education program, and to provide advice that can assist schools with established programs to fine-tune their strategies.

The AIEF Compendium is the first of its kind and a first for AIEF – a private sector-led, non-profit organisation established in 2008 to provide scholarships that enabled leading schools to scale their Indigenous education programs and create more opportunities for Indigenous boarding students.

In the years since, AIEF has grown to offer over 500 scholarships per annum and deliver mentoring and career support to the students and graduates supported by its programs.

AIEF expanded its network of partner schools and colleges to accommodate this growth and began to observe common approaches and practices that were fundamental to the success of the Indigenous education programs at these schools.

For the most part, these programs developed the practices fundamental to their success in isolation, through trial and error, over many years. Despite the difficulties inherent in this process, many were achieving retention and Year 12 completion rates in excess of 90%.

AIEF decided to embark on the Compendium project after considering what could be achieved if the expertise within these programs was collected, collated and shared with boarding schools across the country.

AIEF commenced research in 2013 with funding from HSBC Bank. One of the most striking outcomes of this research was the consistency across schools regarding the most important drivers of a successful Indigenous education program.

Views and approaches towards these ‘critical success factors’ varied widely, but their importance in achieving successful outcomes with Indigenous students was almost universally recognised:

**Leadership commitment:** a genuine and personal commitment from the school leadership to the program.

**Resourcing:** Indigenous education programs must be resourced sufficiently and effectively to ensure success and sustainability.

**Enrolment considerations for scholarship recipients:** in particular, ensuring that students most likely to succeed receive the opportunities available, with a focus on students with enthusiasm, aspirations, parental support and a positive attitude to learning.

**A welcoming environment:** a supportive and welcoming school environment that is genuine, authentic and entrenched, rather than purely symbolic.

**Relationships:** relationships with Indigenous students, their families, their communities, with the broader school community, with external organisations and other schools are critical and far-reaching. Effective communication that is regular, respectful, open and inclusive is at the heart of these partnerships and relationships.

**School structures and frameworks:** these need to be student-centred, carefully con-

ceived and implemented to ensure the right staff are in the right roles and have the resources needed to do their jobs effectively.

**Learning and transition support:** where needed, additional support for Indigenous students needs to be targeted, responsive to students’ needs and focused on ensuring that all students complete Year 12 and successfully transition to a sustainable career and further study.

The schools that contributed to the AIEF Compendium developed an understanding of these critical success factors through trial and error. The AIEF Compendium sets out to equip schools with the expertise developed by these programs and in so doing, hopes to help schools achieve outcomes in years that might otherwise take decades.

AIEF will distribute copies of the AIEF Compendium to schools across Australia, and because ‘best practice’ in this field is constantly evolving, AIEF has also established an interactive portal, the AIEF Compendium Online, where educators can continue to develop and share best practice in real time.

Educators can sign up at [compendium.aief.com.au](http://compendium.aief.com.au) to read and respond to the AIEF Compendium; connect with other professionals from Australian boarding schools; blog about experiences and initiatives within their own programs; and ask and answer questions in the discussion forum.

To ensure quality and relevance of community content, membership of the portal is restricted to education professionals with a current .edu.au email address.

Just as AIEF Scholarships enable individual schools to scale their programs, the AIEF Compendium has the potential to scale opportunities and success rates in boarding schools across Australia to the benefit of thousands more students than the 7,000 AIEF aims to support through its programs.



## COMPENDIUM Online

A resource of best practice for achieving successful outcomes with Indigenous students in Australian boarding schools











## Letz Live: Interview Questions

AUTHOR  
Samantha Lorking-Tanner  
Letz Live

*Sam interviewed one of their Gap Assistants working in the U.K to find out what it was like to be a Gappie. The answers are interesting...*



**1. As a boarder yourself, what do you find is the biggest difference between a UK boarding school compared to an Australian boarding school?**

The biggest difference that I have found would have to be the greater cultural diversity in the school itself. Within my previous boarding school in Australia we rarely had a large number of international students as our country is so isolated; however here in England there is a range of international students from across the greater European and Eastern countries such as Russia and China. This is due to the countries being in such close proximity to one another and is often seen as quite elite to send your child to a boarding school in England. I have found this to be equally fascinating seeing how the international students adapt to the lifestyle here in the UK and also a learning curve for me hearing about each of their cultures.

**2. Food is always a hot topic for discussion in boarding school circles. How does UK boarding school food compare to Australian standards?**

The question every "Gappie" wants to know... I think it's fair to say that UK Boarding school food is a lot more traditional than Australian standards. Such as the formal Sunday roasts on offer and the traditional English breakfast available every morning. The food here is delicious and I have found myself hiding from the sweets and biscuits that are on offer at ALL HOURS OF THE DAY! Let's just say you are never hungry.

**3. You know what it was like being a boarder - the tricks / pranks / stunts etc you would play on boarding staff. What is the best you did when you were a boarder and give us an idea of what prank / stunt / tricks have been played on you during your time in the UK?**

The best prank that was played out when I was a boarder would have to be when every student's individual school shoes were taken from us for an "art assignment" for the seniors. Unbeknownst to us we woke to our school shoes smothered all over our courtyard. We then had to sieve through all these school shoes to find our own in the nooks and crannies and trees! I went to a large boarding school by the way... about 235 pairs of school shoes to be exact. I can't say the boys at my school have played out many pranks on me yet... However there was one morning where I went to wake up the older boarders for breakfast and opened the door to find none of the boys in there! A mini heart attack later and the possibility of being fired or sued as I lost nine Year eight boys in the night resolved in them hiding under their beds to scare me. Now I only wake up the grade three's....

**4. Now that you're a staff member in a school - what advice would you give to Australian boarding schools?**

The only advice that I would give from my experience so far would have to be for Australian boarding schools to take advantage of their school grounds and facilities. This being



# Letz Live: Interview Questions



due to the fact that the weather here has a large impact on the access the children have to the grounds here in the UK. Australia is extremely fortunate with the weather yet outdoor activities are sometimes overlooked. It is healthy to spend time outside in the fresh air as I have noticed when the weather here is dry the children are instantly in a happier and more motivated mood in school once they have spent some time on the ovals in the sunshine.

**5. What type of activities do you do on weekends in the UK? Do you find them better/more enjoyable than ones you might do in Australia?**

On the weekends I often find myself travelling into London as it is only a short commute to where my school is. There is always something to do over here because there are mass amounts of public transport that can take you literally anywhere at an affordable price. Yes, I find weekends more enjoyable over here as there is always something to do. Also people are really fascinated by you knowing that you are from Australia and you feel pretty cool knowing you are international.

**6. As a staff member working within a boarding school, do you see many advantages to students who board over day students?**

As a boarding staff member I see many advantages to students who board compared to day students. We have a small population of boarders who are below the age of ten, yet they seem to be slightly more independent compared to that of a day boy due to the fact they live away from their homes. The

older boys such as the thirteen year olds are more mature as that they are being taught quite significant life skills by being away from home, such as respect and confidence. This I feel is really important being a boarder myself as these skills will be extremely beneficial in later life.

**7. You're currently on a Gap Year working in a boarding school in the UK... Can you give us a run down of what happens in the day of a life as a Gappy in your school?**

In my school I have the position of a Gap Matron, this role requires me to help deal with not only the boarding side of the school, but the first aid side too. In the mornings, I wake the boys up and get them dressed and ready for school whilst doing duties within the boarding house. During the day I work as a teacher's assistant in subjects such as English, Maths, Geography, Music and Woodwork which is a great experience for me. I often get asked to go on school excursions which is also an extremely beneficial experience for me. Though these are off campus trips I get to see some very traditional and "must see" sites; such as Queen's Trooping the Colour. On some afternoons the students will be playing matches against other schools which is a great social afternoon as I get to meet other gaps from nearby schools. In the evenings we put on a movie for the senior boys, and read to the younger boys before they go to sleep. Every day isn't the same, this is really refreshing because it helps prevent my days becoming repetitive. Since there is so much going on around here, every gap student will have a completely different experience.





# Lights Out

## Letz Live: Interview Questions

### 8. Aside from the international travel, what is the highlight of your Gap year (within the boarding / school community)?

The highlight of my Gap year within the boarding / school community would have to be the people I am surrounded by. The teachers have made me feel so settled and part of the school community which in turn has given me great confidence this year. I have become really close with my colleagues in the boarding house and the two other gaps which has made me feel so comfortable. Because of becoming friends with these two gaps, I now have connections in Canada and England. Also I am lucky to have been placed in a smaller school, this is because I get to know each of the boys on a more personal level, which I have found to be really special.

### 9. What advice would you offer to Yr 12 Boarders in 2015 who are looking at following in your footsteps and spending 2016 working in a boarding school next year?

If you love to travel, meet amazing people and create unforgettable memories; a Gap Year is the path for you. You mature, grow and gain greater independence, which is a vital attribute to have. You get tested and pushed to your limits, but if it wasn't this way, you wouldn't be able to reap all the special opportunities that are presented to you, that you will cherish for a lifetime.



**“extremely beneficial for the individual and the school”**

### 10. How has your boarding school experiences benefited you for a) life as a Gap year participant and b) for independent travel throughout the UK / Europe?

Being a part of boarding school in the past for six years has positively affected my experience as a “gappie”. Living away from home, has taught me to not only be more independent, but also the importance of compromising. These two attributes have proved to be very valuable on my Gap Year in the UK. Being a boarder has also been really useful for independent travel throughout the UK / Europe as I feel comfortable and able to travel on my own due to this independence that I have gained through my time of boarding.

### 11. Do you think a ‘Gap Year’ program is valuable / worthwhile option for both school and participant. If so, why?

Any student that has decided to take a Gap Year would definitely agree with me in saying it's one of the most worthwhile experiences that a young person can have. For me I took a Gap Year to travel, meet new people and discover more about myself. I wanted to learn, grow and understand more about the world whilst being surrounded by likeminded people. A Gap Year program is not only worthwhile for the participant but for the school as it bridges the gap between the students and the teachers as you are seen as more of an older sibling rather than an authority for teacher. I personally believe that the Gap Year program is both extremely beneficial for the individual and for the school.





# The Art (and Science) of Apologising

AUTHOR  
Conrad Mathias  
Boarding Staff  
St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill

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Sometimes we get it wrong. We may get the facts wrong; we may not have all the facts; we may make a disproportionate response; or we may let history cloud the present. With our adults in training, a significant amount of time is sometimes spent on breaches of the rules, or breaches of the spirit of the rules.

When we get it wrong, our adults in training apply a finely calibrated (six decimal points) personal justice measuring device. The high moral ground beckons. It doesn't always work the other way – responsibility and wearing your mistakes for the students are dealt with by a broader brush. That's okay – judgement is the icing on the growing up cake, and some cakes leave our care un-iced. Hopefully the job will be finished elsewhere.

The art of restoring a relationship which has been damaged by an error on our part is a great opportunity to demonstrate how adults should behave and how adults in training should aspire to behave. Taking one of our charges aside quietly and admitting that we got it wrong – even partly wrong – will deliver a great message. Sometimes we may need to do it more publicly.

The science of it just makes good horse sense. If we want to run a community where people own their words and deeds then there's no better opportunity to show that in action by standing up and saying "I got it wrong..."

When children deeply respect the adults in their lives (by watching them lead good lives) they remain relatively free from peer pressures and the shallow cultures which surround them. If teenagers do not see the adults in their lives as strong, confident leaders who are prepared to face up to it when they make an error, then they pattern their lives after peers and celebrities.

I believe that the point of the whole exercise pivots on getting young people to move from self to others. Our children will not grow up when they can take care of themselves - but when they can take care of others – and want to do so. The life-outlook of small children is "me first" and the teen years is the time to leave this attitude behind. If teens retain this self centred outlook into adulthood, they are headed for disasters later in their relationships, marriage, and careers.

We can talk about restoring relationships by a simple apology until we're blue in the face – but by doing it and modeling how it is done, we give our charges strategies and blueprints for what to do when they do move from self to others in their world outlook. Art and science – part of a balanced education.



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# 2015 E.J Connellan Award

AUTHOR  
The Connellan Airways Trust



The Chairman of the Connellan Airways Trust, Mr Gavin Carpenter OAM, today announced Andi-Claire Killeen Pegler to be the winner of the 2015 E.J. Connellan Award. She will receive \$20,000.00.

Andi-Claire has grown up on Navarra Station, a sheep and cattle property near Isisford, a small town in Central West Queensland, located on the Barcoo River. She attended Yaraka State Primary School, a one teacher multi level school, 220kms south of Longreach, and completed her secondary schooling at Wilderness School in South Australia. Andi-Claire began her tertiary education in 2014 at Flinders University in South Australia studying for a dual degree in Early Childhood Education and the Arts, majoring in Visual Arts and minoring in Philosophy.

Andi-Claire says “successful and effective teachers provide fundamental assistance to students, allowing them to flourish. This in turn contributes to a vibrant and productive nation. I intend to return to Outback Australia and work as an educator in the bush. The field of music education as a developmental tool for the brain fascinates me, and I believe that people in rural and remote areas deserve to access this resource for their children”. She adds that hopefully by providing a high level of education in the bush it will contribute to the revitalization of bush communities which are facing ever-diminishing numbers due in part to the lack of services.

Mr Carpenter says “Andi-Claire has a proven record as a responsible and energetic community member being involved with numerous organizations. This award will enable her to continue her dual degree specialising in early brain development, specifically neural development in young children through creativity and music. The Trust is pleased to be able to support Andi-Claire as her vision sits with the Trust’s objective to promote and encourage the advancement of knowledge of people, especially younger people, living on remote stations and in small settlements in outback parts of Australia. We look forward to following her progress”.

The Award was established in 1988 by the Connellan Airways Trust in honour of the founder of the Trust, the pioneer Northern Territory aviator, Eddie Connellan, who was a man of strong and passionate character, with special abilities attuned to trail blazing. He was a successful pastoralist and a visionary business man; he played a prominent role in Central Australian affairs. He was a legend in his own lifetime.

The award aims is to assist people over the age of 16 years who live in the remote areas of Australia. Since the Alice Springs based Trust commenced in 1981, it has been able to provide more than \$3 million to the residents of the Outback.

The Connellan Airways Trust will fund the E.J Connellan Award again next year, with applications closing on 31 January 2016.

The Trust welcomes donations, which are tax deductible.

For further information contact Kaye Clapin, Executive Officer of the Trust, on 1800 733 810, or visit the Trust’s website at [www.connellanairwaystrust.org.au](http://www.connellanairwaystrust.org.au)



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## Olivia Has Left The Building

AUTHOR  
Gary Jowett  
Director, Business Manager  
Reach School Boarding System

Imagine being able to type a boarder's name into your mobile phone at any time and know in an instant where that boarder is. Are they on campus or off campus? Where on campus are they? When are they expected to return to the boarding house? This is an example of instant knowledge that becomes available when you automate your boarding house activities.

Following on from our story in the last edition of Lights Out about REACH where we showed how boarders can easily sign in and out of a boarding house to any number of locations using tablets or touch screens in the reception of the boarding house, it is worthwhile demonstrating just how we can utilize that process of location tracking to provide valuable information to boarding staff.



When a boarder assigns themselves to an on-campus location or when they are signed out to an off-campus location by staff then their location status and historic records are immediately updated throughout the REACH system.



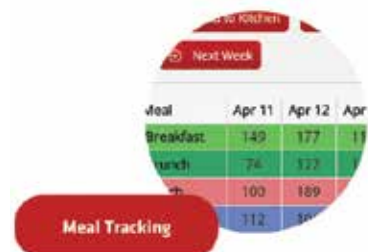
At all times in REACH there is a real time count of boarders and their current location. How many are on or off campus. Also, each on campus location is identified with a real time boarder count and a simple hover over any location on the REACH screen will provide a list of boarder names at that location.

Individually, each boarder's current location is also updated across all of REACH's screen views, most notably the Kiosk view where a colour coded location identifier forms part of the boarder image. Hovering over a boarder will provide location and return time verification.



The meals manager in REACH will also be updated to calculate required meals for each meal-time based on the number of boarders known to be on campus for each meal. The meal count matrix can be easily shared with or viewed by catering staff and from term 3 the meal counts will also account for special meals (eg: gluten free, vegetarian, etc).

The location tracker is also valuable when taking roll-calls with boarder locations being noted and any approved off-campus boarders identified in every roll-call list.





# Olivia Has Left The Building

## In an Emergency

Perhaps the most important record of boarder locations is in within the emergency feature in REACH. This is a facility that can be activated whenever there is a lockdown or evacuation procedure in place on campus. Activating the REACH Emergency feature sets off a series of events that helps a school to manage a high risk situation.

Once the Emergency facility is activated, REACH generates a report of all boarders and their known location at that moment. This is circulated to all designated staff immediately with a list of boarder names and their known location on campus. This report can then be used to assist staff with roll-calls at designated assembly points or in locating any missing students.

Boarders who are off campus at the time of activation will receive an automated message requesting that they confirm their off-campus position with staff.

Recording student movements is the first step in providing high quality reporting which provide boarding administrators with greater insight and knowledge of their boarding community. It provides staff with rapid access to real time and historic information about individual boarders or even populations of boarders.

*REACH Boarding is a partner of the ABSA. REACH version3 is being released in Term 2 of 2015 and all ABSA members are invited to access a free trial of the software at [www.reachboarding.com/freetrial](http://www.reachboarding.com/freetrial)*



### EMERGENCY ALERT

ROLL CALL LIST AS OF  
28-04-2015 14:32



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Dear Steven,

An Emergency Alert has been triggered by Greg Mc Donald. The Emergency Type is Fire.  
Below is a roll call list with the current location of every boarder within your school.

IMAGE	NAME	YEAR	HOUSE	MOBILENo.	LOCATION	NOTES
	Armstrong, Brian	7	Roberts	0040 123 658	Boarding House	
	Armstrong, Liam	9	Joseph	0499 242 175	Boarding House	
	Barrett, Michael	10	Kirk	0419 982 145	Library	
	Beatson, James	11	Kirk	0418 148 149	Gym	
	Biggs, Connor	8	Roberts	0400 213 369	Cricket Oval	
	Blades, Sam	8	Roberts	0401 554 445	Cricket Oval	
	Bolton, Tim	7	Roberts	0489 149 675	Boarding House	
	Brown, Matthew	9	Joseph	0419 245 387	Gym	
	Curran, Grant	10	Kirk	0499 723 912	Boarding House	



## St Philip's College 50th Anniversary

### AUTHOR

Kris Wheeler  
Head of Boys' Boarding  
St Philip's College

It has been an exciting and busy start to the year in the St Philip's College boarding house. We celebrated our 50th anniversary as a boarding house over the weekend of Friday, 13th March through to Sunday, 15th March.

There were many, varied events that took place to celebrate the 50 years since St Philip's opened its boarding house, which was also an opportunity to share memories and rekindle friendships.

The weekend was kicked off with a Friday Night Muster in the boarders' quadrangle. It was a barbeque dinner hosted by present and past Heads of Boarding. This was a trip down memory lane as attendees were invited to bring stories and photos to add to the Back to Boarding "memories" book.

It was a wonderful night with many past boarders telling current boarders stories of how boarding used to be back in their day and how good they have it now!

On the Saturday, current boarders gave school tours to guests to show them how much St Philip's has changed over the years. This was followed by a historical scavenger



hunt around the grounds of St Philip's; this was a chance to trace the history of the development of the school by following 16 clues.

The main event of the weekend was the Saturday evening dinner in the College quadrangle. The dinner comprised of a gourmet barbeque with damper, followed by the 50th birthday cake for dessert. The dinner was followed by the Bush Bash, with the Bush Bandits performing, led by Headmaster, Chris Tudor.

Once again this was a wonderful night of celebrations and laughter! There were over 300 past and present boarders along with staff who attended Saturday night's celebrations.

The weekend concluded on the Sunday with a chapel service followed up by morning tea at the Fred McKay Museum. This was an opportunity for attendees to say farewell and swap addresses with friends old and new.

It was a successful and wonderful weekend of celebrations for past and present boarders, the current boarders are already talking about returning for the centenary celebrations in 50 years time!

The boys' boarding house has also gone through a new refurbishment over the last six months. The boys' rooms were transformed with a fresh coat of paint, new beds, large individual cupboards and shelving, new desks and chairs, vanity units together with new curtains and lighting. The refurbishment has given a fresh, modern feel to the boarding house, much to the boys' excitement.

We have also taken on the REACH boarding school software, which both staff and parents agree has been a huge success in managing our students. We have found the software to be very efficient and transparent and very easy to use. Most importantly it has simplified our management of the boarding house by reducing the amount of paperwork.





# From Kings To Cannakale:

## Boarders from The King's School visit Gallipoli

To honour past students at the Centenary of Anzac

AUTHOR  
Dr Steven Middleton  
Director of Leadership Studies The King's  
School, Sydney, NSW

**“The experiential learning opportunities provide students with an opportunity to express something far bigger than their own individual sense of self.”**

*“By dawn on December 20th Anzac had faded into a dim blue line lost amid other hills on the horizon as the ships took their human freight to Imbros, Lemnos and Egypt. But Anzac stood, and still stands, for reckless valour in a good cause, for enterprise, resourcefulness, fidelity, comradeship, and endurance that will never own defeat.”*

Educators charged with the development of leadership capacity and character of students within school residential settings will have no doubt participated in Anzac Day commemoration ceremonies over the past month and reflected on the role of Anzac in shaping Australian identity. At The King's School, the involvement of former students in various conflicts throughout the history of the school is something that shapes, like many schools, much of our identity and tradition. At the time of the Great War, the student body of King's was only 220 boys, yet 665 former students joined the rush to enlist. Significantly, over 100 served at Gallipoli and of these 16 old boys would never return home from the peninsula. As we as Australians reflect on the meaning and significance of Anzac and its influence on the values outlined by the Official War Correspondent, Charles Bean from the outset, I was fortunate enough to join a small group of King's boarders on a pilgrimage to the shores of Anzac Cove to commemorate the service and sacrifice of former students.

The significance of experiential learning for 21st century learners cannot be understated. When this learning is connected to something bigger than oneself, in this instance the war time experience of former students, the impact on student development and world perspective can be profound. This was precisely my observation of the emerging maturity of the students I accompanied to Turkey. Having left home at an early age and developed the confidence that such independence brings I noted the ease with which the boarders navigated the cosmopolitan world and challenges of Istanbul and wider Turkey. Although only 14 years old my travelling companions were far more worldly and aware than I would have been at this similar age. There is no doubt that the experience of community living and the respect it engenders for the rights of others can be easily translated from the residential experience to that of learning whilst travelling. For these students experiencing Turkey for the first time, the ritual of the daily call to prayer for practising Muslims and the mag-

nificence of The Blue Mosque, dominating the skyline of the city offered a fresh and insightful view of Islamic culture. Further afield, our party paid visits to the remarkable geographical region of Cappadocia, the Mediterranean port of Kusadasi and the historical ruins of Troy and Ephesus which all served to place the ancient Turkish culture in context, particularly in comparison to our own.

Our pilgrimage ended at the town of Cannakale, at the entrance to the Dardanelles, where thousands of Australians with similar objectives had set up a base as a stepping stone to explore Gallipoli. The students were wonderful cultural ambassadors for Australia and King's, capturing the attention of many in their School Uniforms, paying respect for their forebears but also the Turkish people who welcomed them as long lost family, returning home. As we participated in a Dawn Service on the 25th of April on a small beach just inside the Dardanelles, our thoughts turned to the many young men from King's and beyond who, much earlier, had conducted a similar expedition far afield but never returned. For those of us experiencing Gallipoli for the first time, the landscape and its challenges were sobering. The cliffs, ridges and gullies far deeper and inhospitable than images in books can convey. Trudging in land towards the cemetery at Lone Pine via a muddy track at Shrapnel Gully revealed the immense yet futile achievement of the landings. One cannot visit these sites, significant to both Australians and Turks without feeling the enormity of what was both achieved and sacrificed, providing a deeply sobering experience for anyone wishing to explore this beautifully poignant site. For our boarders, the realisation that the young men remembered in cemeteries with exotic names such as Ari Burnu, and Chunuk Bair were barely older than themselves was a challenging moment. The experience of taking students overseas, to expose them to fresh perspectives and other cultures is indeed a marvellous one for educators. This is even more so when the experiential learning opportunities provide students with an opportunity to express something far bigger than their own individual sense of self. For educators looking to supplement learning with these experiences and offer students the opportunity of a lifetime, there are no better friends to experience it with than the good folk at Trans Turk Travel, experts in student travel.



## Your Boarding Career

### - Are You Travelling Up A Mountain or Ladder?

AUTHOR  
Tracy Shand  
Simply Boarding

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“Where do you want to go now boarding professional?”

For years people have talked about the ‘boarding career ladder’ but in today’s boarding world, the best analogy for your career journey is travelling up a mountain. Let me show you how...

As you started your journey in boarding, everything was new. Some people would say that you had just taken the first step on the ladder, and then as you moved on in years and experience you would take another step up until you reached the top. When you get to a certain point towards senior management, I like the analogy of walking along a tight rope, there is no going back and the way forward is challenging. Do you agree?

But, does it have to be this way?

In today’s boarding world, it is time for the career ladder to move on. It provides a restricted view of what we can become – there is no way down or across. It is up or nothing – and that is why so many people, in any sphere of work, get stuck.

For a moment, consider your boarders when they undertake the international award. The adventurous journey is always the part that they remember – the challenges of navigating their way to the next point on their journey to the summit of success and returning to your boarding house. During this journey, they will have got the route wrong at some point, experienced a variety of emotions, followed many paths - but at the end of it all they have the feeling of success. On their return, their first port of call seems to be the ‘wifi’, food then sorting out their backpack – but all of this usually with a smile on their face. The

complaints about sore feet always come the next day....

Like climbing a mountain, while growing your career you can move up, sideways, down, but there is and must always be action. And the difference between the mountain and the ladder is, the mountain can be much higher, offers more challenge and discovery, and the view at every point is unique, wider and better. So, it is time to reframe boarding careers one step at a time.

#### 1. What is the top?

The final view that you want to see? A mountain gives you a chance to stop – camp out for a while and move on when you are ready. See a new one ... do you want to go there?

#### 2. You can go anyway.

With a ladder, there is only up .... or down. With a mountain, there can be many ways to get from A to B. You can reinvent your boarding career one step at a time ... as you move to a different mountain. You can prepare for the next summit or for your descent to leave boarding life step by step.

#### 3. You can move up, down or sideways.

If you know the destination you want, you may need to change direction. A ladder does not give you that option! Many people have portfolio careers now and different experiences allow different insights which are of value to the boarding world.

#### 4. You can choose your moves....

You can take a risk to choose a high mountain or stay in safe terrain for a while. As you know climbing is based on assessing condi-



# Your Boarding Career

- Are You Travelling Up A Mountain or Ladder?



tions – how would you assess your boarding workplace conditions today? What about how you feel about your career? How does it fit with the life that you want?

Up is always the word that comes to mind when speaking of career advancement. But, is there a correlation between up and happiness? There is a saying that it is lonely at the top! So, let us take some inspiration from my favourite books by Dr Seuss:

**You have brains in your head.  
You have feet in your shoes.  
You can steer yourself in any direction**

**you choose.  
Today is your day.  
Your mountain is waiting.  
So get on your way.  
Dr Seuss**

So, answer me this - where do you want to go now boarding professional? Are you on safe terrain moving forward or struggling towards a peak? What equipment will you need to get you to the summit that defines your personal success? One step is all that it takes .... and as Dr Seuss quite simply says - 'Today is your day'!





## The Day Tropical Cyclone Visited St Ursula's College Yeppoon

AUTHOR  
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Head of House  
St Ursula's College, Yeppoon

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The Parent Only Weekend was coming up and most of the girls were going home to be with their families. A Category 5 cyclone named Marcia was predicted and she was heading straight for us. I was grateful to our colleagues at St Brendan's College and the other boarding schools in Rockhampton for the insight and initiative in bringing forward the departure day for the girls to leave on the western buses. Heavy rain had already started cutting off roads. We had to get as many girls home as we could, so they would be in the care of their own families. Unfortunately, some girls could not go home as they lived too far, in places like Vanuatu, Dauan Island, Badu Island, Yam Island and Saibai Island. Thus 14 girls had to stay in boarding.

This, you may say, would have to be one of any Head of House / Boarding's worst nightmares, having to go through a natural disaster with your staff and boarders. Yes, I would agree. But in my case, I was born and raised in North Queensland so I was quite used to cyclones. Preparation was the key word. I went about ensuring that everything was in place. You can never over prepare yourself for a cyclone. My primary concern was of course, the safety of the 14 girls who remained in my care as well as two staff, one of whom reside on site. Our boarding house is made of bricks, is three storeys high and is very strong and structurally sound. On ground floor, the common room area is protected on three sides, so it was the safest area for us to stay in.

A make- shift dormitory was set up in the ground floor common room for the girls to sleep. Personal belongings and clothes for three or four days were brought downstairs, as once lockdown was called, no-one would be allowed to leave. The girls were frightened but also excited. For them it was going to be like a big sleepover with their friends. Some of them had never been in a cyclone, so they thought it was quite exciting. An evacuation plan was relayed to everyone so they knew what was needed of them in case of an emergency evacuation. All our food supplies, water, torches and batteries were on ground floor for easy access. A generator was on standby in case power was lost. We were now prepared for Marcia. Cyclone Marcia was predicted to hit Yeppoon as a category 5 cyclone with winds up to 200kph. Winds of that speed can cause major destruction, so everyone was expecting the worst. Cyclone Marcia was to hit Yeppoon around 4am on Friday 20 February. Instead, by daylight, the category 5 cyclone made landfall around Shoalwater Bay, just north of Yeppoon. By the time Marcia got to Yeppoon it had weakened to a category 4: it then moved inland, battering Rockhampton and surrounding communities.

To describe the sky when there is a cyclone is to say it's a strange grey colour. You get this eerie feeling that something is going to happen. The cyclonic winds would come at a great speed, and as quickly as it started, it would stop. This went on for hours. There



# The Day Tropical Cyclone Visited

## St Ursula's College Yeppoon

**“Be well prepared and say a lot of prayers”**

were a few power surges before losing power. It was only around midday but it was very dark. The girls were very good throughout this anxious time and at no stage felt unsafe. Occasionally, they would have a look outside to see what damage there was and ask when would it be over, and then they would return to their board game or whatever they were doing.

Finally, Marcia was done with us. We were all relieved. We had survived Marcia with little structural damage to the buildings. As we ventured cautiously outside we could see that some of the gutters on the College buildings were strewn around the grounds, some trees were uprooted and some trees were shredded of their leaves just leaving their bare branches. We were very lucky. In a nearby street, power lines were down, roofs blown off houses and some older houses only had the framework left.

We had no power and no phones for four days. Over those four days, we were awoken by the sound of chainsaws buzzing and generators humming as the big clean-up had started. The girls assisted with cleaning up the College grounds of debris in areas when it was safe to do so. Their true community spirit really shone when they went to Cooberie Park Wildlife Sanctuary to assist them with their clean-up. Teaching staff joined a roster to keep the girls occupied during the day.

The girls kept themselves busy by playing games like cards and Monopoly, reading and going for supervised walks. They had fun and enjoyed each other's company. Night time we would talk and bond over many stories. Bedtime was dictated by the generator and each night I would hear girls quietly chatting and giggling. The nights were extremely hot and very still. Plastic plates became our fans to keep ourselves cool.

When the power came back on we all rejoiced loudly. The Army had come to town and they were helping Yeppoon and district to get back on its feet. Life was starting to go back to normal. The girls were a little disappointed as their adventure was coming to an end.

I have been asked on many occasions how we survived Cyclone Marcia. My response is that I have been through many a cyclone and I knew what to expect. Cyclones have a mind of their own and you need to always take them seriously. Be well prepared and say a lot of prayers. Weeks have now passed, everything is back to normal but for me and the girls, we will always remember the day Tropical Cyclone Marcia visited St Ursula's College, Yeppoon.





## Surviving The Next Step

### From Boarding School To University - the Students' Perspective

#### AUTHOR

Sarah Hain and Isabel Faulkner  
Resident Tutors  
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Moving from school to university is a monumental event in anyone's life. You go from being the big fish in a little pond to suddenly finding yourself in a lake with a lot more fish and vastly more freedom than you ever had at school. This can be both daunting and



exciting at the same time, and it is easy to overlook the fact that you are not the only one starting university for the first time. Many university students start out their degrees while living on campus. Indeed, being part of a residential college system can be extremely helpful as there is a strong support base from the older residents and you quickly become part of a community. So, what is this transition like from a student's perspective, and what activities and processes are in place to support you? The information below is based on experiences from our own college, Robb College, at the University of New England (UNE). We are both Resident Tutors, in our third year of residing within the UNE residential system, and attended boarding schools in southern New South Wales and Brisbane.

First, joining a college allows you to meet and live with a range of like-minded students, including those studying the same degree as you, which can be extremely beneficial to your own studies. Colleges tend to have a unique character or 'personality'. For example, Robb attracts many of its students from rural and regional settings, particularly studying degrees related to agriculture. This commonality assists with students having a critical mass of people around them with the same assignments, lab classes and learning needs.

Second, academic support of the university transition is extremely accessible in colleges, and everyone is happy to lend a helping hand. Colleges like Robb have a team of Resident Tutors that facilitate the academic and pastoral care at college, helping to ensure that everyone succeeds academically to the best of their ability. We have a weekly study-night, with peer-based study groups of people in similar areas of study, and also run extra tutorials when necessary. It is highly recommended that first-year students get involved with this support at this critical point in their university life.

Third, university is where you are encouraged to pursue your own interests, both academic and extra-curricular. They are also extremely flexible institutions, meaning that one's academic pathway is never set in stone and changes can be made along the way. Studying something that you are genuinely interested in creates a completely different study experience from when you were at school, and access to university-level sporting and interest groups helps reinforce that.

Fourth, university life is a social one. UNE colleges each have a Junior Common Room (JCR) Committee whose main job it is to organise the social and charity aspects of college. The JCR at Robb has a strong presence and is in charge of maintaining traditions and the culture that makes Robb so unique. It hosts our major annual events including the Parent-Student Ball, Robb Ball, and our weekly themed pub nights. These social events contribute greatly to the spirit of the whole college.

Being involved in sport and charity events is also a major part of being part of a college such as Robb. Each year we choose a charity to support, generally one which is rurally focused. In 2014, our charity was Buy a Bale, and this year it's Lifeline, in support of 6Nil. Throughout the year, we have charity-themed events, including a moonlight cinema, producing a tasteful nude calendar, and a week dedicated to raising money for our particular charity. It is a great aspect of Robb College, and everyone gets involved.

Similarly, everyone at Robb participates in some way in our many sporting teams. We play netball, hockey, rugby union, water polo, volleyball, and basketball, as well as in a weekly inter-college and the annual university games competitions. So sport is a major part of our identity. We start the year with three 'fresher' matches against a rival college – hockey, netball and rugby. Robb's Rugby Union Club is the oldest current club in the New England competition and everyone gets involved in supporting the teams each Saturday during the season. So, if you have a sport you enjoy participating in, come prepared!

Lastly, being at college allows you to make new relationships and professional connections that enhance your experience at university. This gives you an immediate friendship and support base, invaluable in helping you get through your studies. But more importantly, Robb alumni ('Robbers') are spread far and wide across the globe, and will help open many social and professional doors in your future.

So that gives some sense of how residential colleges can assist with the transition to university life. We also asked some of our students what additional advice they would give to anyone contemplating moving to a residential college, and their responses are in the following profiles.

# Do you know where your boarders are? REACH does



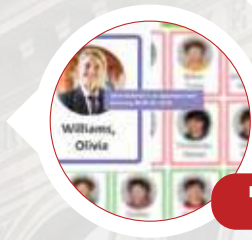
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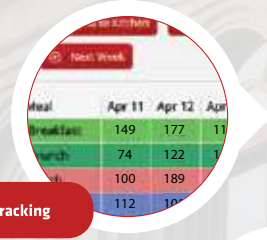
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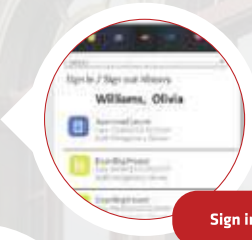
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# A Word from the Chairman

AUTHOR  
Garth Wynne  
Chairman  
Australian Boarding Schools Association

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One of the most significant responsibilities of any organisation is to ensure that the governance processes that are in place are relevant and effective. Over the past six months the Board of ABSA has been considering subtle changes to its governance model so as to best afford growth and development within the organisation while attending to strategic planning and appropriate monitoring of performance. To manage this complex responsibility the Board is shifting towards a policy governance style promoted for Not-For-Profit organisations by John Carver. In this governance model there is clear separation in the roles and responsibilities of the Board and those employed within the organisation, most significantly the Chief Executive Officer. In the ABSA context this approach sees the Board responsible for strategy and monitoring of organisational performance and the Executive Director responsible for strategic implementation and effective management against the ends of the organisation. Governance of organisations is not a particularly complicated process when there is clear understanding of the why, what and when as it reflects the

organisations ends and who it serves. I am pleased to let the members of ABSA know that this review is almost complete.

At our Board meeting in March it was a pleasure to welcome a number of new members, Mrs Sue Collister representing Victoria and Principals, Dr Phillip Moulds from Rockhampton Grammar School and from Wilderness School, Ms Jane Danvers. Their collective wisdom will add a great deal over the coming years to the deliberations and considerations of the Board.

During first term ABSA conducted a very successful Taking the Reins conference in Brisbane. The opportunity for those new to leadership in residential communities to learn from each other and through an interesting guest speaker programme is now a regular highlight for the membership. Feedback from the 2015 cohort was very affirming and complimentary of ABSA and its support both inside and outside of the conference.

During the term break I had the good fortune to visit Bond University as a part of my being the Principal in Residence for 2015. During the visit, along with our Executive Director, Richard Stokes, I was able to speak with representatives of the University regarding the accreditation process at a diploma level for our currently 'in-house' Duty of Care certification. I am confident that these considerations will bring great benefit to membership in the near future as we seek to add greater professionalism to the industry.

Finally as the coolness starts to spread and winter makes its presence felt in and around our schools, can I urge all that work within residential communities to take good care of themselves. It is important to recognise that if one wishes to serve the needs of the students then care of self must be a high priority. We can only be the best for others when we are at our own best and that takes some attention.

**“It is important to recognise that if one wishes to serve the needs of the students then care of self must be a high priority.”**



# Coming Events

## AUS

**16 - 17 August 2015**

Leaders Symposium  
Alice Springs

### **Duty of Care Workshops**

Check out [www.boarding.org.au](http://www.boarding.org.au) for details

## UK

**13 - 15 July 2015**

Annual Conference for Nurses and Matrons  
London

## USA

**3 - 5 December 2015**

National Conference  
Boston

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