

# Lights Out

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## Boarding House Unveiled

The King's School, Parramatta



AUSTRALIAN  
BOARDING  
SCHOOLS  
ASSOCIATION



## CONTENTS

- 02 Finding Success
- 04 Social Media influence
- 06 Duty of Care
- 08 A week at Hamilton and Alexandra College
- 10 Boarding House Restructure
- 13 The 10 Commandments
- 15 Sex Ed
- 16 Good things ...Better things
- 18 New Principals & Heads of Boarding
- 20 13 things happy people do differently
- 22 Take it or leave it
- 23 Risk Assessment
- 24 Punishment replaced
- 26 Boarding the Worawa Way
- 27 Importance to both Management and staff of clarifying nature of occupancy
- 28 Being the Girlfriend Magazine Psychologist
- 30 Making Connections
- 34 Trainee Teachers
- 35 Calrossy Anglican School

### ON THE COVER

Broughton Forrest House,  
The King's School

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## Finding Success

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It has been suggested that to be successful as a boarding parent you need to be able to drink three cups of coffee before 8am and keep it in the system until after 5pm. To be a successful boarder is rather more demanding. It requires:

- The body of a Greek God/Goddess
- The sporting ability of an Olympian (preferably without steroids)
- The mind of Einstein (but without the hair).
- The social appeal of ... (insert suitable person).
- And the wealth of the average banker before the Global Financial Crisis.

All this can be a touch daunting for the average boarder struggling with 'C' grades, uncoordinated limbs, a mumbled conversation and a propensity to blush in the company of the opposite sex. They might also be struggling with a Facebook page devoid of any 'friend' who could remotely be considered a prize.

**“Our Boarders can be overwhelmed by the task of growing up”**

Heaping coals on the head of the average youth is the implicit expectation that they should do at least as well as their parents, and probably better. As a teen, I distinctly remember being in awe of the fact that my parents had learnt how to drive a car, got reasonable jobs and had saved enough 'moullah' to secure a modest home. Furthermore, their dinner conversation was made up of the relaxed banter of those who had read well, travelled a bit and knew a thing or two about contemporary literature. How had they done it? I was flat out learning the road rules for my 'L' plates, holding down a part-time gardening job and buying myself the latest Hendrix offering. And I knew sweet nothing



# Finding Success

about foie gras. Evidently, it's not a form of artificial grass!

Our boarders can be overwhelmed by the task of growing up. Comfort is not provided by schools with 'The Future is Unlimited' sorts of mottos (usually in Latin). Neither do schools help when they wheel in a steady procession of inspirational speakers who have all sorted themselves out and become famous. As a boarder in 4B (the bottom grade), I found it all rather depressing. School prizes won in my early teens were limited to a dictionary given at Speech Night. I think it was, 'For trying'.

There are some quite well-known anecdotes, reflections and pithy sayings that can be shared with a student struggling with the 'Will I ever make it?' question. Chief of these is the poem, 'Success' which has been attributed (wrongly) to Ralph Waldo Emerson. Here, in a slightly adapted format is one of the best definitions of what success is.

## SUCCESS IS:

*To laugh often and much;*

*To win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children;*

*To earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends;*

*To appreciate beauty, to find the best in others;*

*To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child,*

*A garden patch or a redeemed social condition;*

*To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived.*

*This is to have succeeded.*

Other literary gems exist such as Rudyard Kipling's 'If'. But, there's the problem ... 'If'. It implies a condition, a prerequisite, an obligation to do something if the prize is to be bestowed. This can be an uncomfortable truth for our boarders. Attainment is elusive, except, perhaps, in the home where superlatives from well-trained parents can be heard – even for performance that is quite modest.

Unfortunately, outside of the home, the judges are harder, and their grades are less generous – unless undisputed genius is displayed. For this reason, a student needs to be encouraged in the boarding house but not to the extent that mediocrity is adulated. The world can ill afford to have its ranks swelled by little princes and princesses who think the world beyond the front door adores them. Therefore, a boarding parent must tread that difficult path between encouragement and exhortation; between, 'Well done' and, 'I think you can do better'.

Best of luck with it all.



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## Social media influence Isn't it time your school told a great story.

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Is your school's content resonating with your community? This is something that used to be difficult to measure. With Twitter it is easy to see the basic metrics such as tweets, followers, retweets, mentions, favourites etc - but these cannot be solely used for measuring social activity. Social Media has transformed communications in 2013, and schools need to adapt to these shifts in user behaviour and technology advances to attract and convert the modern family.

“Are your tweets grabbing people's attention?”

www.Interactive-Schools.co.uk has been researching and analysing the social influence of the private school markets in the UK and Australia – with a view to publishing a full 'alternative' league table based on Social Authority.

### What is Social Authority?

Social Authority measures your school's influential activity, primarily through the number of retweets. It's a 1 to 100 point scale based on a user's influential content (100 being the best). It highlights the schools that are incredibly effective in engaging their followers. Some schools struggle to create content that resonates with people and this table will help to establish needed improvements.

The great thing about authority is that it is not directly a matter of how many followers you have, rather the content you create and how your audience reacts to it. Followers is a reaction of good content, not the cause.

### How your school can use Social Authority?

So, all this stuff is great - but actions...give us actions! There are a high number of ways that Social Authority can be used by schools. The simplest actionable insight you can get from Social Authority is an overview of how well is your content performing. The higher your Social Authority, the more shareable your content.

It also gives a deep insight into the affinity people have with your content - if they are willing to share this content with their followers, then they are strong advocates for your brand. If you have a low score then ask these questions:

- Are your tweets grabbing people's attention?
- Are your tweets actionable?
- Are you engaging your audience?
- Is your school easily discoverable?
- Do your tweets have a high visibility?
- Is there a strong affinity towards your school?

How influential are your followers? Having influential people following your tweets increases the likelihood of your message spreading through trusted and authoritative sources.

Your school should follow schools with a high Social Authority and take a look at how they interact with their followers. This will allow you

to analyse their content and tweet strategies to help you make informed decisions about your own.

### Which ABSA school has the best Social Authority, and what can you learn from them?

ABSA schools have been slow to adopt Twitter – only 42% are on Twitter in some capacity - so there is still some way to go in terms of real engagement. In the UK, 76% of independent schools are on Twitter.





# Social media influence

Isn't it time your school told a great story.

## Top of the ABSA table: The King's School (#socialscore 19/100). Ok. Not great.

The King's School (@TheKingsSchool) are currently number one overall on the ABSA League Table. Why? Because they are engaging with their audience through replies, retweets and mentions. This gives their followers a feeling of community, which increases the likelihood of reciprocal communication. The school does not tweet as regularly as many schools (an opportunity for your school!), but they engage better than most.

Not only do The King's School engage with people, but they tweet interesting content - which include the use of hashtags, therefore creating (and joining) conversations! They

do this on a regular basis, which constantly keeps their followers aware of the school.

As a benchmark, the leading UK Independent Boarding School has a Social Authority of 39. In general, schools have a low social authority. There are a number of reasons for this. Lets take Abbotsleigh in Sydney (@Abbotsleigh) as an example.

They have a Social Authority of one but have 383 followers. They have an audience willing to listen to them and ready to consume their brand message but their tweeting schedule is very diverse. This quiet and disjointed downtime has led to their authority dropping. If you are not tweeting regularly, it will be difficult to receive a high Social Authority.

Social Authority is not about the number of followers you have, but how you engage the audience you do have. You could have the most followers in the world but if you are not engaging them, you will not be an influencer.

Begin to tweet regularly, then after a month check your social score again. Keep experimenting with different content and different styles - find out what resonates with your followers.

### What is my school's Social Authority?

If you want to know your social score then tweet us @intSchools using the #socialscore hashtag.

## Comparison of followers of TheKingsSchool & TCSTownsville & GeelongGrammar



- 979 followers of TheKingsSchool
- 317 followers of TCSTownsville
- 178 followers of GeelongGrammar

followers only of TheKingsSchool »	934	65.6%
followers only of TCSTownsville »	279	19.6%
followers only of GeelongGrammar »	165	11.6%
followers only of TheKingsSchool & TCSTownsville »	33	2.3%
followers only of TheKingsSchool & GeelongGrammar »	8	0.6%
followers only of TCSTownsville & GeelongGrammar »	1	0.1%
followers of all three »	4	0.3%
<i>combined total followers</i>	1,424	



**The King's School**

Social Authority: 19

Followers: 979

Days on: 1,453



**The Cathedral School**

Social Authority: 12

Followers: 317

Days on: 934

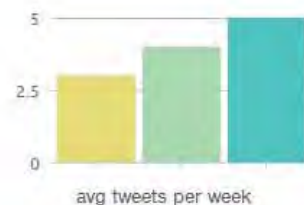
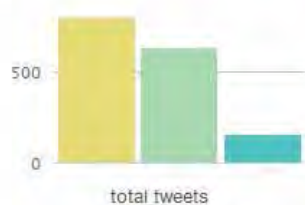


**Geelong Grammar**

Social Authority: 12

Followers: 178

Days on: 179



## Duty of Care

AUTHOR  
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“Sees us  
protecting  
ourselves”

In a past life, I used to ride off on my motorcycle, with a tent, cooking gear, sleeping bag and a few clothes, for trips of between ten and forty days.

A conversation I once had at the Cann River Hotel during a month on the road has stuck with me all this time. It was a busy night at the Cann River Hotel, and I ended up sharing a table with a farmer and his teacher wife from Moe. She had recently been at a school-based professional briefing, after which the Principal had concluded that teachers were no longer allowed to leave their classrooms to go for a pee. My new friend reflected that her classroom happened to be right next to the toilet, and so a pee would entail her being away for a maximum of two minutes. Yet her Principal had told her ‘No’ - that duty of care would not allow it.

My response to her, which I do not think she found very useful, was that if I could not trust my class for two minutes while I went to the toilet, then I would consider myself to have failed as an educator. I felt that there is something very wrong with this situation. I have reflected on the expression ‘duty of care’ for years now and think that I have discovered where we have gone wrong. We have defined it as the next two minutes, rather than a lifetime. This has had disastrous consequences for education.

If I am totally responsible for a child for the next 30 seconds - and my life will be terminated if anything happens to her - I will probably hold her motionless.

If my duty of care is three hours long, and then it ends, I will keep a close eye, and stay within close proximity, to this child. Some type of leash sounds like a good idea.

If my duty lasts all day, I’ll probably not let the child out of sight. No climbing trees, rough sports, outings, or anything that could end up with me being held responsible. Actually, if my duty of care is absolute, holding the child down is still the best option, but just a bit tiring for a whole day.

In schools, duty of care has for a decade or so sat somewhere between 30 seconds and the duration of a class (50-60 minutes). Logically for those held responsible, duty of care defined as total responsibility for a very short duration, has led to massive restrictions for those in their ‘care’.

I have always taken my duty of care - as a man, friend, teacher, father, principal, brother and son - very seriously. Sometimes I have felt stifled by society though, when it speaks of duty of care. The difference being - the time frame. I want to educate my children and my students so that they will become valuable and viable members of society. Doing my job properly has a lifetime of consequences. If you take your duty of care as the child’s lifetime, rather than just the next class, the difference, in terms of action, interaction and restrictions is significant.

In thinking about myself, my own three preschoolers, and the many children I have worked with, I have realised that some of us just need to go too far, to come unstuck, and to learn our lessons that way - through the feedback from, and consequences of, our own actions. Duty of care with a 30-second horizon tortures us, and means that some of life’s necessary lessons are delayed and only later learnt as adults, where the bumps and hurts are harder and take much longer to recover from.

People learn what works and what does not work naturally through trial and error. Defining duty of care as the next 30 seconds makes looking after these children (or adults) a torturous affair for the guardian, and negates the essential learning that comes through getting it wrong.

I would say that we have failed in our long-term duty of care (for me this is all duty of care really is) with these children when we deny them the freedom to try things out and discover for themselves what works. We should draw the line where the errors of the inexperienced can be very costly: we don’t let little ones cross the road. But it is a fact of human growth that bumps occur, and that learning from bumps cannot be avoided, just delayed. When learning is delayed way past the age-appropriate stage, the bumps and consequences are, I believe, more devastating.

Duty of care as it now stands sees us protecting ourselves, not those in our charge, and is a weak, fearful engagement with the world. In protecting ourselves, we fail to truly look after those in our care, in that we frequently fail to prepare them for a lifetime of bumps and challenges. Surely our real responsibility, our true duty of care, is to raise viable, happy and valuable citizens.



# BETTER BEDS FOR BRIGHTER MINDS

Between hectic schedules, homework and hormones, teenagers need quality sleep to ensure they can be mentally and physically ready for the demands that each day brings. In fact, adolescents need around nine hours of sleep every night. Studies show that lack of sleep can affect concentration, cognitive capacity, decision-making and the ability to complete a task. Insufficient sleep also deeply impairs the ability to consolidate learning that occurs during the waking day. In other words, it wreaks havoc on our memory. With sufficient sleep, it's possible to learn with more focus and better manage emotions.

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## A week at the Hamilton and Alexandra College

AUTHOR  
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The idea of this exercise was for me to gain an understanding of what the Director of Boarding and Boarding Staff roles were in the Boarding Houses and at the School. This was not an easy task, as there were very late hours and long days that I had to get through!

**“Working in a Boarding School is like looking after a big family where the staff are the parents”**

As I travelled down to freezing cold Victoria I was very anxious and quite nervous to spend my week working at the Boarding School at The Hamilton and Alexandra College. I arrived in the cold, late at night on Sunday where I was greeted by the lovely Jane Horne who is the Director of Boarding at the College. On the way to the Boarding House I had a great conversation with Jane about the exciting week I had ahead of me which was full of a wide range of duties! Jane showed me where I would be staying for the week and introduced me to the two Gap Students I would be living with. Nico was from Germany and Sean was from England they were both extremely nice men and hard workers.

Now looking back on when Jane and I talked about the week we had planned there were many unplanned jobs and meetings with various leaders in the school which arose throughout the day. I now know how tiring and frantic this job can get. I remember Jane

saying she had the night off from 6pm and the next day saying she had to sort something out until 10pm! I do believe it is a very rewarding job after all the long hours that are needed to be put in though.

To me, working in a Boarding School is like looking after a big family where the staff are the parents. There were arguments, mischief and immaturity that went on through the week but I believe it all balances out with the good things that come out of a Boarding School. The friendships that had been made between these boarders will be something I won't forget, they wouldn't hesitate to do anything for each other even if it was simple as cleaning up their friends plates at dinner.

One of the fondest memories I have is when Jane and I were having a friendly chat with some of the boarders and we asked what they had done for the day. They said that they had an exam and had to write about a hero, so we asked “who did you write about?” and they all replied “You, Mrs Horne”.



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# A week at the Hamilton and Alexandra College



My time working in the day school was very different to working in the Boarding House. At the start of the day all the teachers would gather in the staff room and have a little gossip session - I look back on when I was in school and realise now how every teacher knew what everyone got up to on the weekend! At the start of the week I found it hard teaching and instructing the students in their PE classes, but by the end of the week it was becoming fun and it did not seem like something I had to do, it was something I wanted to do.

Because of the relationships that are formed in boarding school I found it a very fun and high energy place to work in but VERY tiring at the same time. I loved being in the common room and being able to make conversation with the boarders and learn about their

lives and thoughts on life. I noted that it was important to keep their life balanced so every night there would be a boarding staff member who would drive the bus to the local sports games or horse riding and there was after school study, which gave them so many fantastic opportunities.

Overall I had an awesome week. There were funny, serious, tiring and out of the ordinary moments which I think made me have a very interesting time in the boarding school. I can't thank The Hamilton and Alexandra College, Jane Horne, Nico, Sean and the boarders themselves enough for all the experiences that I will never forget.

I have heard a lot about what it is like being in a boarding school, but you don't really know until you experience it.

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## Boarding House Restructure

### A Housemaster's Perspective of the opportunities and challenges

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On the 15th March, 2013, The King's School celebrated the opening of Broughton Forrest House. This was the culmination of eighteen months of planning. It also completed Phase One of the School's redevelopment of its boarding facilities and its most significant investment in its boarding facilities since it moved to its current site in the 1960s.

To create Broughton Forrest House, the School merged two separate boarding houses, Broughton and Forrest Houses, a process that will be repeated with the remaining six Boarding Houses. Broughton Forrest House's capacity is 82 boys, whereas its predecessors had capacities for 55 and 40 respectively. It is vertically structured, accommodating boys from Year 8 to 12.

As a Housemaster, there have been both opportunities and challenges, not just since the opening of the House, but also in the planning and renovating stages. How these were dealt with may be of interest to those managing change in their own boarding environments.

#### Celebrating the old and new

While the building was being renovated I spent considerable time with the inaugural Captains and senior boys discussing and deciding on the tone we wished to establish in the new House and how we could achieve this. I also chatted with all the younger boys



individually and in year groups about the traditions and values we wanted to maintain from the 'old' Houses, and the ones we sought to change. It was important that all boys felt that they were contributing and had their opinions heard and this was a factor that has given the boys a sense of belonging to the new House.

Despite creating a new House and occupying a new building, it was also important to continue to celebrate the original Houses' 180 years of combined history. A number of pieces of memorabilia as well as honour boards and House photos dating back to 1908 have been installed. In addition to honouring the Houses' heritage, it has also maintained a sense of continuity.

#### Staffing, supervision and security

The increased physical size of the building and the number of boys in it represented immediate challenges for supervision. Traditionally, a single staff member, assisted by the House Matron, supervised the boys before and after school and on weekends. It was fortunate that the School was able to allocate more staff to the House, providing improved staffing ratios and pastoral care. In Broughton Forrest House at night there are now two staff members on duty supervising and supporting boys. Boys must also have their room doors open during Prep and responsible senior boys have been interspersed with the junior boys to model good study habits.

Weekend supervision is now shared between two staff members who provide active supervision of the boys. However, gaps still remained in supervision, particularly when staff members on duty are coaching sport, and so a patron position was created. Currently the House has three young old boys who work every third weekend, covering for staff as well





# Boarding House Restructure

A Housemaster's Perspective of the opportunities and challenges



as helping cook Sunday Brunch BBQs and encouraging touch football, basketball and tennis on Sunday afternoons. Not only are boys now better supervised, the patrons have been very popular and are great role models the boys can relate to.

Security is also an essential requirement in residential settings, ensuring boys are safe from intruders and also decreasing opportunities for them to take 'window leave'. The House is now electronically locked during the school day and after 10PM. If access is required, an intercom is available to contact the Housemaster or House Matron. Staff are able to gain access and leave the building once it is secured via swipe cards.

Keyed or swipe card locks were not put on each study door. The rationale behind this decision was both philosophical and practical. It is important to provide students with a homely rather than institutional environment. On a more practical note, it prevents students locking themselves in studies, and means that the staff member on duty doesn't have to spend much of the night unlocking doors for boys who have misplaced their keys! Instead, students are provided with three lockable drawers or cupboards so they can lock away phones, wallets and laptops.

An optimal physical environment for boys central to the school's building program was improving the facilities provided for boys. To

this end, the building has reverse cycle air-conditioning. This also eliminated the risks associated with boys providing their own individual heaters and fans. It was one of the most popular improvements with both parents and boys, but it did take some time to convince the boys that the thermostat did not need to be set to Antarctic temperatures in Summer!

With boys becoming bigger, the School decided to provide all boys with a King Single bed. This presented a significant design challenge as the larger mattresses took up more floor space. However, since we saw this as such an important feature, rooms were made slightly larger. The cavity beneath the bed has been converted into two large storage bins with hinged lids, providing ample space for storage of suitcases, sporting equipment and the like. To solve the issue of boys leaving shoes around their rooms, eight 'pigeon holes' were also built into the base of the bed. These design features have meant that the boys' rooms also appear tidier!

## Increased Privacy

Traditionally at the School, Year 8-10 boys have been accommodated in dormitories, and Years 11 and 12 boys have been in single bed studies. When planning the layout of the new building boys, parents and staff were consulted about how the boys should be roomed, with factors such as privacy, peer relationships, home environments and supervision all considered. The school made the decision that boys in Year 8-10 would be accommodated in shared twin bed studies with a full height dividing wall and Years 11 & 12 would be in single studies. This represented significantly increased privacy for the junior boys and has created a more conducive academic environment.

The challenge this presented was the possibility of boys 'retreating to their caves' and not mixing with other boys in the House. To combat this, 'break out spaces' were included in

**“Culmination  
of eighteen  
months of  
planning”**

# Lights Out

## Boarding House Restructure

A Housemaster's Perspective of the opportunities and challenges



the design with features such as large dining room tables, nooks with lounges and coffee tables and undercover outdoor areas where groups of boys can sit and chat. There are leather couches which can house all boys for House Meetings and 'compulsory' events such as State of Origin, as well as a pool table and table tennis tables. On Sunday afternoons the whole House engages in 'low tech' time and boys are compelled to leave the House and swim, visit the Sports Centre or kick a football with their mates.

### Facilities for parents

Whilst boarding caters for students, the needs of parents were also considered within the project. There was much excitement amongst parents, especially mothers, when a parents' bathroom and sitting room were unveiled off the main foyer. In order to ensure the

use of this space is optimised, a piano has been installed in the sitting room so boys can practise and a sofa bed has been purchased to accommodate the patron or visiting staff members. The parents' room has been used by parents catching up with their sons and in one case to give a wayward son the rounds of the kitchen table. Similarly, the parents' bathroom doubles as an accessible bathroom and is also used by domestic and duty staff during the week.

### Conclusion

I was recently asked whether I felt running Broughton Forrest House was better or worse than running Broughton House. My response was that it is just different. The time leading up to the opening of the House, and its first term of life have been challenging but also incredibly rewarding.





# The 10 Commandments of House Parents

AUTHOR  
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## 1. Love one another in the same way you would want them to love you.

- or do unto others as you would want them to do unto you! If you treat others how you want to be treated it will make a difference. We talk about forgiveness, then we need to show it.

## 2. Let your language always be seasoned with love, hope, positiveness and gentleness.

- be firm and assertive, but do not cross the line to harshness, put-downs or abuse.  
- Swearing, gossip and bullying have no place at home or school.

**“What you expect is often what you get”**

## 3. Be consistent.

- Don't make one rule for some and one for others. How you react, how you discipline and how you treat others needs to be the same for everyone!

## 4. Your private life is your private life, don't let it spill over into work to confuse students.

- sometimes we can try to give too much information and students don't need to know every detail. Also males need to keep away from the female dorms and visa versa.

## 5. Hypocrisy is a hard pill for others to swallow.

- your directions to students must match the actions you take.  
- don't say one thing and do another as your life has to match what you say. "Who you are speaks so loudly that I can't hear a word you are saying!"  
- Don't say "Don't smoke!" and smell of cigarettes. Don't talk on the dangers of alcohol and then joke about what happened when you were drunk.

## 6. Your phone is your friend, but don't give it time when you should be working.

## 7. Be engaged with students.

- You are at school to work, so work rather than socialise with other House Parents or sit around doing nothing.  
- but also give students space and respect, eg. knock on their doors before entering their rooms.

## 8. Be persistent.

- changing behaviours and attitudes will take time, so don't give up and don't act out of frustration as that will be a negative that destroys ten positives.  
- it is hard to get people out of bed but stick with it without getting physical or frustrated.

## 9. Set high standards.

- what you expect is often what you get. Every student has the potential for greatness and we need to point them to that and show that it can be achieved, one step at a time!

## 10. Listen to others, students included, as we can then learn about them, ourselves and this amazing world God has given us.



# Is your website looking a little "old school"?

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# Sex Ed

## Not just found in the classroom.

AUTHOR  
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Founder  
The Self Centre

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Sex ed, or sexual and reproductive health education as it should really be called, can be awkward and confronting for any teenager. You're sitting in a classroom, the same one you may very well be learning about quadratic equations in and all of a sudden your teacher starts to talk about the birds and the bees. Add into that mix, English is your second language and your cultural background suggests that this experience is all kinds of wrong. For your average international student, sex education in the traditional classroom setting can be both confusing and isolating. Other students are laughing and you're not quite sure why, words are being used that you've never heard of and you don't have the confidence and or language skills to ask for clarification. Yet, the subject matter, sexual and reproductive health is just as relevant to you as it is to your peers.

Helen Butler, Head of Boarding and the Overseas Students Wellbeing Coordinator at Firbank Grammar School in Brighton Victoria, has recognised that a lack of knowledge regarding sexual and reproductive health amongst her overseas students cohort, many of whom are boarders, is of great concern. A number of her students arrive in Australia in order to complete their VCE, meaning they have missed any form of sex education offered in the classroom through the Personal Development curriculum. This not only leads to potential health problems, but relationship problems as well. This is where I come in.

At the end of 2012, after eight years of being a Psychology and Health and Human Development teacher, as well being Head of the Personal Development Department at Firbank Grammar School, I decided to resign. Not because I had lost my love for teaching, but because I saw a real need for personal development workshops which focus on the needs of the individual student. So I started my own company, The Self Centre; a company which exists to help teenagers know themselves better and work out how to nurture a happy and fulfilling understanding of who they are, how they study and how they interact with others.

So when Helen contacted me asking if I would be interested in offering sexual and re-

productive health workshops to the overseas students at Firbank Grammar School in years 10 to 12, I jumped at the opportunity. Over three Friday lunchtimes, I visited the boarding house at Firbank Grammar School for what turned out to be one of my most rewarding teaching experiences yet. Despite attendance being entirely voluntary the numbers were good, although the girls were initially apprehensive. Unsure as to what to expect from the one-hour session, they sat in tight clusters, holding on tightly to their beanbags, just in case they needed to bury themselves to escape any potentially confronting topics.

Using a harm minimization approach, we addressed areas such as puberty, contraception, STIs and respectful relationships. The girls were given an opportunity to ask questions anonymously through every sex educators favourite tool, the question box. Allowing all students to ask questions anonymously is of vital importance. It allows students to ask questions free of judgment, questions they would never have the confidence to ask in

**“Allowing students to ask questions anonymously”**

a class discussion or public forum. Fear of ridicule and potential embarrassment is of upmost concern for any student. Using the boarding house as a setting was also very important to these students, as it's a safe place to them. The feedback from the students was fantastic. The board-

ing house captain contacted me after the workshops to thank me personally, saying the information was particularly helpful to the senior students as most of them are planning on staying in Australia to complete their tertiary education.

I applaud Firbank Grammar School for implementing this initiative as part of their overseas program and I look forward to working with their borders in the future. If other boarding schools are interested in The Self Centre ([www.theseelfcentre.net.au](http://www.theseelfcentre.net.au)) offering workshops to their students please do not hesitate to contact me on [liz@theseelfcentre.net.au](mailto:liz@theseelfcentre.net.au) or 0418 134 210.



**The Self Centre**  
*Where the student is the subject*

## Good things ... Better things

AUTHOR  
Jeremy Holt  
Director of Boarding  
Assumption College, Kilmore

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Some wise body once noted, 'Sometimes good things fall apart so better things can fall together.' This is certainly true for boarding at Assumption College, Kilmore. At the start of 2014, the boarding community will vacate its present location in Shandon House – the very first of school buildings and which boarders have occupied since 1901 – and move to a new, modern and custom-built boarding facility, dubbed 'The Pines', positioned in a most scenic spot on the far side of the main oval, The Carroll. This follows an extensive eighteen month period of research, surveys, investigation, visits, consultation and debate involving a wide range of people and key stakeholders such as boarders and their families, boarding staff, boarding people from various boarding schools in Victoria and interstate, ABSA, the Marist Brothers, appointed architects Y2 and builders SJ Higgins, the Assumption College Council and its mandated project sub-committee under the guidance of Mr John Brenan.

As all people who work in boarding instinctively know, boarders are the heart and soul,

or *genii loci*, of any educational institution as they live the experience and, in some sense, claim ownership of the College space and place of residence. The ACK boarders, in this instance, are no different. They are undoubtedly 'the leaven in the bread' of all that ACK

has to offer. In recognising the significance that boarding has played in the life of Assumption over more than one hundred years, and a desire to maintain its boarding tradition, it has been hugely affirming and encouraging to note the commitment of the Marist Brothers and the College Council to the future of boarding in ap-

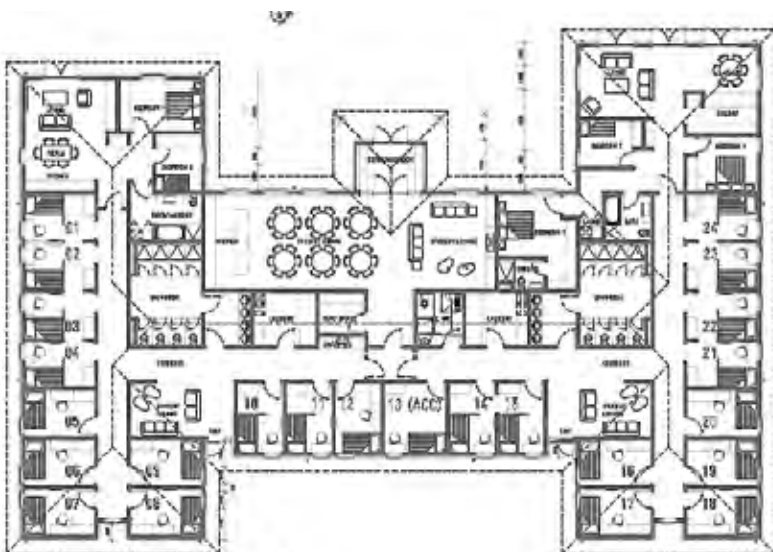
proving the building of this multi-million dollar facility.

The current and somewhat outdated paradigm for boarding at ACK, consisting of dormitories, cubicles and supervisors, will be replaced by a new paradigm consisting of three vertical houses (with a provision for a fourth) with live-in staff and their families, more consistent with twenty-first century education and boarding, the Marist philosophy of education and family and also in keeping with the College's quickly evolving pastoral house system.

If you look carefully at the attached architectural drawings, each house will have spacious three-bedroomed and two-bedroomed staff accommodation on each end for a head-of-house and assistant head-of-house and their families. In this sense, working in boarding is seen as a lifestyle and vocational choice where family – one of the key tenets of the Marist philosophy and charisma – becomes central. In each house, there will be space for 24 boarders with a mixture of single, double and quad spaces, allowing for the various maturational and academic needs of young people at different ages and levels of development.

It is an exciting time for boarding at ACK as it stands on the threshold of better things. The old building has done its time and served its purpose well. It now awaits a facelift and conversion to a senior educational facility for the broader ACK community. The 'Pines Project' beckons – essential services are completed and building has started. While hope and anticipation are tangible, we would be wise to remember, however, that it is not

**“The old building has done its time”**







# Good things ...Better things

the bricks and mortar used in the construction – although the creation of beautiful space does impact upon us – that defines what it essentially is. The living institution transcends the materials that give it form and shape. The objective is an idea and ideas are the foundation that institutions are built on and with. Our adherence to a vision of life and relationships vested in people espoused by Marcellin Champagnat – the founder of the Marist Brothers – must surpass, in the final analysis, all other considerations.



## New Principals & Heads of Boarding

### Scotch College

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Chris Braithwaite  
Dean of Boarding  
Melbourne's Scotch College

Mr Chris Braithwaite – a Scotch senior physics teacher since 1987 and a member of the boarding house staff since 1995 – has just completed his first year as Dean of Boarding at Melbourne's Scotch College.

Chris took over from Doug Galbraith, who retired from the key leadership position after 32 outstanding years working in the boarding community.

With Chris's two sons – Adam and Rhys – having attended Scotch, and his wife Isobel well known around the campus as manager of the bookroom for the past seven years, Chris has a firm handle on what makes Scotch tick.

He also knows the boarding house well. The Braithwaite family moved into residence in the boarding school in 1995 when Chris became a Tutor in McMeckan House, and he became Deputy Head of House in 1997. During 1998, Chris was appointed Head of Arthur Robinson House. Chris started teaching in 1976. On arrival at Scotch he first served in the Army Cadets, and then moved to Social Services, also coaching soccer and volleyball teams. He was Head of one of the School's day houses for several years, but relinquished this position to become Head of Arthur Robinson.

As Dean of Boarding, Chris says he is building on Doug Galbraith's strong legacy. 'I would like to further develop greater ties between the day school and the boarding community, with a strong emphasis on academic success,' Chris says. 'The Hill brings together a diverse group of staff and boys who have many different skills and interests. This offers boys the opportunity to interact on many different levels.'

'Through this I would like to see the boys challenged and encouraged as they mature into confident young men, ready to meet the opportunities that await them after Scotch'.

### Ascham School

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Dr Helen Wright  
Headmistress  
Ascham School, Sydney

Dr Helen Wright was appointed Headmistress of Ascham School, Sydney in January 2013. She is a leading commentator on education. Before Ascham she was Headmistress of the UK's leading schools St Mary's Calne in Wiltshire and Heathfield in Ascot, and at 30 was one of the youngest ever appointed public (independent) School Heads.

She is renowned for her knowledge of and passion for girls' schools and her forthright opinions on education, motherhood and parenting. She is an author and blogger and speaks at education conferences and events around the world.

Her book 'Decoding your 21st Century Teen' was nominated for an award ahead of its publication in 2012. Dr Wright is also the author of language books 'Learning Through Listening' and a translation of Elisabeth Behr-Sigel's 'A Monk of the Eastern Church', and has had numerous articles, chapters and reviews published. She has worked for the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and the International Baccalaureate (IB) as an examiner and consultant.

In 2011, she represented the leading UK independent girls' schools as President of the Girls' Schools Association (GSA), representing the interests of over 200 of the UK's top schools. She was also awarded the prestigious Tatler School Awards' 'Best Head of a Public School' for 2010-2011.

Dr Wright was born in Scotland and educated at Oxford University.



# New Principals & Heads of Boarding

## Hale School

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Alistair Roland  
Head of Boarding  
Hale School, Perth

It is with great delight that I return to the boarding scene after an absence of four years. In 1993 as I was being interviewed for the Head of Geography position at Geelong Grammar School – Corio, the then Headmaster, Mr John Lewis asked if I had ever been involved in boarding before. My response was swift – ‘no never’. His reply was even quicker – ‘then you have to!’

Well here I am nineteen years later still involved in this great vocation. At Geelong Grammar I was able to combine the teaching of Geography with working in a number of boarding houses, both senior and junior. The greatest highlight for me while at Geelong Grammar, was without doubt, being in charge of Timbertop. It was there that I witnessed what young boys and girls are capable of achieving when really extended. To me it was extreme boarding and it was well worth the challenges presented to teachers and students alike.

Moving from Timbertop I enjoyed a brief stint at Melbourne Grammar, working with Mike Shaw – a real highlight. From there the family and I moved over to South Korea for four years – living and working in an international school in a very different country, has given me a wonderful perspective on the challenges international students face when moving abroad to study.

Now back in Australia, working at Hale School in Perth, Western Australia, allows me yet another opportunity to get back into boarding life, this time in a state I had never visited, let alone lived in before! Life’s journey continues.

## Barker College

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Jacqui & Robert McLachlan  
Head of Boarding/Boarding Administrator  
Barker College

Jacqui & Robert McLachlan commenced their new roles in boarding at the start of 2013, as Head of Boarding and Boarding Administrator, respectively. Jacqui is the first female to hold the position of Head of Boarding at Barker College and she brings a wealth of pastoral and boarding experience to the role. Robert has moved from the the world of corporate management and he brings his business skills sets to his role to assist boarders to develop their knowledge of the world beyond school and to also develop the Barker Boarding brand.

Boarding at Barker College is a unique experience with separate female and male houses for Year 10 to 12 students only. The Barker Experience attracts boarders from the suburbs of Sydney through to country regions of NSW and beyond. The co-educational and small boarder numbers support the development of peer relationships and social skills, whilst also allowing strong academic and personal mentoring opportunities.

Jacqui & Robert have introduced programs that aim to support the boarders to find their role as citizens of the world. The programs have a focus on the development of life skills, personal resilience, mental fitness and individual strengths utilisation.

Jacqui & Robert are looking forward to the challenges of building upon Barker’s well established reputation in boarding and leading the Barker Boarding Community on it’s next stages of evolution.

## 13 things happy people do differently

AUTHOR  
Dr Tim Sharp  
The Happiness Centre

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People aren't simply happy or sad, we're both. Sometimes at the same time.

Happy and sad are momentary experiences, just as hunger, melancholy, joy, grief or clarity are things you experience in a specific moment.

These things define a moment, not a person, so while happiness isn't something you possess as you do with a shoe size or eye colour, it is something that you can cultivate more of.

Happiness can surely get you into trouble if you go about it in the wrong ways (by padding life out with the accumulation of stuff rather than filling it with moments of value, for example), but at its core, happiness can remind you of all that's good in the world, rather than focusing on all the bad things.

This is why it's worth bothering about, because happiness adds to your perception and lends you perspective, always lending you a better, simpler way of looking at things.

We're not setting out to be part of an inane, smiling, delusional cult of happiness here. I can't think of anything worse or more irritating.

But if happiness feels like something you'd like to experience more of, here are 12 things happy people do differently that you can start with.

### 1. Practice gratitude

Being grateful and thankful doesn't turn you into the kind of simpleton who would say "Thank you, I love ducks" right after being pushed into the boating lake. It does however, create thinking that tunes you in to the good things you have in your life rather than becoming more and more blasé about them.

Practicing gratitude focuses you on what life brings rather than what it doesn't, and that's where happiness comes from.

### 2. Prioritise nourishment

Nourishment is more than eating your vegetables and getting a decent night's sleep. It's about making sure your head, heart and body are kept topped up with the stuff they need not only to function, but to flourish.

If you're not taking good care of yourself little else will matter.

### 3. Don't pursue status

Your brain is wired not only to figure out where you sit in the professional and social pecking order against others, but to reinforce your position in that pecking order.

Yeah, we're hardwired to be assholes sometimes.

When you get wrapped up in establishing or maintaining status, the moment your place in the hierarchy drops you're going to feel pretty horrible, like you've screwed up, that you're no good or that others are better than you.

Don't get into the status game – there are no winners.

### 4. Separate success and specific outcomes

Your level of happiness is not dependent on reaching a goal or objective.

Your success and happiness have nothing to do with what happens, and everything to do with how you perceive your achievements, your value and how you're engaging with your life.

Every time you make your success and happiness conditional on something happening, you're missing point entirely.

### 5. Don't reject or bury the bad

If you're in the habit of brushing the bad stuff under the carpet, sooner or later you're gonna trip up over that small hill that's grown in the middle of the room and end up smashing your ego all over the place.

You can only ignore or shut out the bad stuff in life (and there will always be bad stuff in life) for so long.

Respect it. Integrate it. Welcome it. Learn from it. Accept it.

### 6. Stay out of the drama

Happy people don't spend their time whining about how hard they're having it, how everything's going wrong, how everyone just needs to stop screwing everything up for you and how life would be so much easier if it wasn't for everyone and everything they do.

Getting into all of the "he said she said" of the world will keep you down in the detail and drama and you'll be excluding all the beautiful and extraordinary stuff that's right there in



# 13 things happy people do differently

front of you.

## 7. Strip away expectations

Inside that noggin of yours, your brain is doing its best to figure out what will happen next so that it can make sure you'll be safe and sound.

So it starts creating expectations for how things will go, what you'll do next and how you'll do it. It creates expectations about what others will do and what that means for your world. It even creates expectations about what other people might expect of you, just so you can fit in, not draw attention and keep on staying safe, secure and certain in your environment.

“Don't get  
into the status  
game”

Only, those same expectations will drastically limit your quality of life and resultant levels of confidence and happiness. So get rid of 'em.

## 8. They know what makes them tick

It's redundant to talk about happiness unless you know something about what makes you happy. So what are the things that make you tick – the stuff that matters to you enough for you to do something about?

You'll experience more happiness from doing the things that foster meaning, flow and contribution, so doing a little leg work to see what makes you tick goes an extraordinarily long way.

## 9. Don't fight against their environment

So many people waste time and energy flapping their wings against the bars of the cage they think they're in, they never figure out a better way to use that same energy.

If you struggle against your environment, your environment will win. Instead, put in some effort to create an environment that's congruent with what matters to you – an environment that brings what matters to life.

## 10. They're connected

Feeling isolated is pretty darn sucky. It's a bit

like being alone in an attic while the zombie apocalypse happens in the world outside. You end up scared, stuck and listening out for sign of an undead brain-eater heading your way.

Okay, so it's mainly the scared and stuck thing. Feeling connected (to others, a project, a community, a family, a cause, etc.) gives you a sense of belonging, a sense that your life and your world are bigger than just you and that you're part of a network that counts for something.

## 11. Notice the small things

I talk a lot about doing stuff that matters to you, making a difference and creating extraordinary change, and the temptation is to think that this is some big, grand, oh-so-worthwhile endeavour.

Truth is, there's wonder in the tiny things too. Holding hands. Sunlight through trees. A steamed-up bathroom.

The way someone smiles. That song you love. Squirrels playing in the park. A car letting you cross the street. The first page of a book. Laughing out loud.

The small things matter massively.

## 12. Leverage natural confidence

Natural confidence is being able to choose your behaviour with implicit trust in that behaviour. It's knowing that you can get on, make choices and do stuff, and deal with whatever happens.

Natural confidence is freeing, simple and powerful, and it's the quality that allows you to get out there and do what matters.

## 13. Know they don't need to be happy all the time

Happy people don't bank on feeling happy all the time. They know that it's transitory, and they know that there are moments when it's a choice.

Thinking that you need to be happy all the time or that you're owed happiness will put you on the road towards Missingthepoint-completelyville.

Happiness is as much an intention – a precursor to a moment in time – as it is an outcome.

How are you with this whole happiness thing?

## Take it or leave it

AUTHOR  
Dave Scott  
Director of Boarding  
Scotch College, Adelaide

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The issue of leave for boarding students is one that is, I am sure, high up on the focus list of many Directors and Heads of Boarding. The duty of care issues surrounding leave are significant, and the requirement to have readily to hand all relevant information, including parental and host permissions, are of vital importance in order to meet our duty of care requirements.

With a vision for our leave system here at Scotch, I approached our Director of ICT, David Jones. David listened carefully to what I wanted and within 24 hours had come back to me with a system, which is more or less the one we are now using. This system replaced the old style paper-based system and has significantly reduced the administrative load for students and parents, and particularly for staff.

David's very clever and unique design operates on touch screen ipads located in the reception area of the Rosevear Boarding Precinct. Students are able to check in and check out, either by using the touch screen or by scanning a QR application from their smartphone. The system allows students to check out of the boarding house for on-campus activities such as sport or cultural practices, and for off-campus activities such as medical appointments or educational visits and, of course, day and overnight leave. The system uses real time monitoring of student whereabouts. A watch list allows for tracking

of students and has the ability to set time limits for leave and to 'gate' students, preventing them from checking out.

The system also allows students to order late dinners, relaying this information automatically to the Catering Manager, who can also access the system. The Catering Manager is also able to see student leave information in real time and is able to adjust his catering numbers accordingly, which is particularly valuable at weekends. Other features of the electronic system include the ability to individualise student leave records and review patterns of leave at the click of a mouse; record and track student gatings; send SMS messages to individuals and groups, e.g. to remind them of timings; produce data on leave trends, individually, by year group and/or by gender. A WiFi ipad is available to duty staff so they can walk around and check on students' whereabouts, and for use as an accurate evacuation roll in case of an emergency evacuation.

David's system has been built using Filemaker Pro software and is all his own design. Alongside this system David has also designed an electronic leave form which is currently used via our email system (First Class Client). This also assists to reduce paper and administration time and allows students to apply for leave remotely and receive leave approval by return email, once the required leave conditions have been met. David is currently look-





# Take it or leave it



ing at ways of incorporating SMS into this system. Recently the ABSA SA Branch met at Scotch to look at the Scotch system in action and talk with David about the design and implementation of the system.

Having a sophisticated electronic leave system that has been designed 'in house' enables us to adapt and refine the system at any time to suit our needs, and is the most efficient and adaptable system that I have seen in all the years of my boarding career. The process of conceptualising and implementing this system has highlighted for me the value of utilising the knowledge and expertise that is often found on your own doorstep. If you are interested in the benefits of a tailored leave management system, I would encourage you to talk to your IT staff about your requirements and possibilities.

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## Risk Assessment

AUTHOR  
Andrew Knott  
Special Counsel  
Tresscox Lawyers

We have been requested to make some brief comments about the concept of risk assessment. At the outset it is important to emphasize that this is the equivalent of being asked to summarise Shakespeare in fewer than 1,000 words. However, we can give some fleeting indication of the nature of the concept, and we note that if one 'Googles' the phrase 'risk assessment', an enormous number of entries appear.

It is important to bear in mind the background, namely the duty of care, that is the duty of care imposed on boarding house managers and staff to take all steps reasonably open to them to minimise the risk of physical or psychological injury to the boarding house students in their care. Risk assessment is, in essence, a means of addressing the discharge of that duty, particularly in a pro-active way.

The essence of the idea is that in determining what is necessary to minimise the risk of accidents, one analyses the situation in which risk exists, tries to identify the hazards, and the sorts of consequences that those hazards can have, and the nature of the injury (whether physical or psychological) that may result.

It is then appropriate, having done that, to move to planning what steps can be taken to minimise the risk of the hazards occurring or the consequences of them. Accordingly, it is very much a matter of identification of potential hazards and then planning to minimise that risk. It then of course becomes necessary to act upon the identification and the analysis by having pro active plans to ensure that staff are prepared to implement the steps that can be taken to minimise the risk of the relevant hazard occurring.

There is a vast literature on this.

Many employers now actually create documents which set out in respect of particular circumstances, the risks or types of risks which need to be considered and may provide a 'matrix' for completion by staff. Our experience is that, whilst at one level the completion of such documents can seem onerous, it is in fact a very desirable and helpful step for managers to take as it directs the attention of staff to the issues which require consideration. Further, documentation encourages reflection and action.

## Punishment replaced by positive reinforcement

AUTHOR  
David Anderson  
Senior Boarding Housemaster  
Shore School, NSW

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When I talk to parents and alumni who were boarders at school the conversation often centres around recollections on old fashioned boarding school life including punishments. It seems punishments were directed by teachers, boarding house staff and the senior students on a daily basis. It is common for stories of past cruelty and bullying to be recalled by former boarders throughout all boarding schools in Australia and overseas. The environment that existed in Australian schools was historically linked with boarding schools in the United Kingdom from the commencement of boarding dating back to the 15th Century. Much of the traditional boarding environment was 'punishment' orientated and this atmosphere was retained for a very long time.

For hundreds of years in situations difficult today to imagine, children in different types of establishments were not trusted or respected and did not have a voice. Authorities used

draconian methods to organise and 'care' for their clientele, separating them as much as they could from outside society. Remarkably, parents and children accepted these methods largely because they had been treated in the same way themselves. It was also acknowledged that children did not have rights and parents did not wish to make it worse for

**“Rewards  
not punishment”**

their children if they complained about the administration and organisation of the boarding house.

To amplify the life that children endured years ago, the boarding house staff was confident in trusting senior students to apply their own forms of discipline to fellow students resulting in harsh and inconsistent penalties. For many senior students punishment became a sport, making life a misery for younger boarders.

Change in the control of the behaviour of students in boarding schools came as recent as 1990 in Australia. As most boarding school families came from the bush, many rural fami-







# Punishment replaced by positive reinforcement

lies suddenly found it too expensive to send their children to boarding school due to a sudden change in the rural economy. To attract new boarders to independent boarding schools, many of the past practices related to discipline were closely examined by school administrators. Boarding schools commenced marketing and promoting the enrolment of boarders and the unpleasant forms of punishment were examined, questioned and changed for the first time in hundreds of years.

In my own experience I took over a boarding house where the punishment of boarders seemed to be the order of the day. Young boarders standing against the wall, writing lines and boarders sent on punishment runs around the neighbourhood at all times of the day and night were punishments that had existed for years. Punishment of juniors was a 'game' enjoyed by senior boys. I was able to change this routine by requesting that the senior boarder who dealt the punishment must accompany or supervise the junior boarder or boarders whilst the punishment was being carried out. Senior boarders immediately lost interest in supervising punishment as they were far too selfish about their own time. Counselling of senior boarders commenced immediately about the obvious dangers and cruelty of such punishments. Directly the discipline and correction of boarders became the sole responsibility of qualified boarding house staff. The frequency of all punishments decreased rapidly.

In a very short time the boarding environment became much more positive; rewards not punishment and therefore the boarders could focus on their academic, sporting and co-curricular responsibilities. The atmosphere of the boarding house became much more cooperative and friendly and students took a positive interest in the achievements of their peers as well as older and younger boarders. Punishment is uncommon today and few boarders have unhappy relationships with each other. Senior students today take a very important place in the development of younger boarders acting as role models and providing help to them gained from their own experiences at the school. Respect is now 'earned' by older boarders and not gained by fear.

The new level of behaviour and positive reinforcement of boarders has progressed to the point that boarders can consider themselves as the most advantaged and harmonious group in the school. However parents of boarders who suffered under past harsher boarding regimes still find it difficult to understand how the modern boarding environment is pleasant and without severe punishment.

It is very important that students know their limitations regarding behaviour in the boarding house and also understand the consequences of misbehaviour. Boarding staff should also make sure the boarders appreciate the need for correction to ensure that a fair boarding environment is to the advantage of every student. If there is more than one boarding house in the school, consistency of routine and discipline across all boarding houses is essential including strong communication between boarding staff to ensure uniformity of correction.

One difficulty regarding discipline in past years was the 'covering up' of poor behaviour by students or staff which only led to repeated problems due to inconsistency of penalty. A correction not solved professionally only produces another set of difficult circumstances in the future.

**“Discipline  
is a sign  
of love”**

Discipline is a sign of 'love' for a child in your care – it is important that the boarders are corrected and live in a consistent and fair society, ensuring boarders comply with the rules of the boarding house. Professional pastoral care, positive reinforcement and consistency in the daily routine will allow boarders to be relaxed, happy and successful.

## Boarding the Worawa Way

AUTHOR  
Kim Walters  
Head of Boarding  
Worawa Aboriginal College

“importance  
of culture to  
students &  
families”

At Worawa Aboriginal College, our aim is to produce strong Aboriginal women who will be leaders and role models for their home community and for the wider Aboriginal and Australian communities. This necessitates a holistic education, one where the students' educational, cultural, social, physical and emotional needs are catered for. Worawa programs are underpinned by Aboriginal values.

### Respect

Worawa encourages respect for Country, teachers, House Parents, peers and self and includes the houses – their personal space within the boarding house and the magnificent College grounds. Respect for self is fostered by teaching the students the skills needed to care for themselves and promoting pride in their personal presentation. This includes the way they wear their school uniform as well as the way they present themselves outside of school.



### Responsibility

Responsibility is fostered through encouragement of homework – taking responsibility for one's own learning. House parents speak to the girls about what they are doing at school, encourage their areas of interest, and provide a calm and peaceful environment in which study can be the student's main concern. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own belongings by learning how to use the washing machines and keeping their bedrooms clean and tidy. Responsibility for their own health is taught through the education program as well as our enthusiastic fitness instructor, school nurse and visiting GP.

### Relationship

Relationships are core to our success at Worawa. Each student is a member of a discrete house with a house parent and up to

18 students. The care House Parents provide students is superb. Not only do they live with the girls, they perform so many parental tasks each day, from ensuring they have adequate clothing and food to the teaching of social skills. The love that they have for the girls is most reflected in the routine and stability they provide – they are there when the girls wake up, when they're upset, angry and joyful. The students' emotional needs are attended to by the daily care and attention of all staff. The College has a Wellbeing Coordinator and access to external health and wellbeing specialists.

Worawa celebrates Aboriginal culture and acknowledges the importance of culture to students and families. If students need to return home to attend to cultural matters this is facilitated.

Good relationships with the wider community are encouraged. The College's partner schools program provides exposure to a variety of situations providing social, cultural and sporting exchange and the development of respectful relationships.

### Rigour

A structured program and consistency are the hallmarks of success in applying rigour at Worawa. Students are encouraged to have aspirations and set goals. That inspires their rigour.

Aboriginal families choose to send their girls to Worawa for the 'two way' teaching and learning program offered in a supportive and safe environment. Each student is placed on a personalised learning plan. This plan acknowledges the rich cultural knowledge that each girl already possesses and builds on that foundation through enhancing their relationships, responsibility, respect and rigour, allowing them to leave the College as strong leaders.





# Importance to both Management and staff of clarifying nature of occupancy

AUTHOR  
Andrew Knott  
Special Counsel  
Tresscox Lawyers

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A recent decision of the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal under the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008, while turning on its particular facts and on the particular context of Queensland Statute Law, is a reminder of the importance to both management and staff of boarding houses to address the question of the nature of the occupancy when staff live in a boarding house in which they work.

In this case a person was employed by a girls school in Brisbane as Assistant to the Head of Boarding. An employment agreement in writing envisaged 'tenure of five years subject to annual performance review'. A critical clause in the employment contract was that she would be provided with accommodation 'where available (permanent or temporary) ... and (such accommodation) will be provided where available and according to the needs of the boarding house'.

## “Rooming Accommodation Act 2008”

The accommodation into which the person moved consisted of a bedroom, a kitchenette, a bathroom and a laundry referred to in the decision as 'the unit'.

The College eventually requested the person, by letter, to vacate the unit by a date approximately a fortnight after that letter. The writer explained that whilst the person remained medically unfit for duty the unit was needed to accommodate 'replacement supervisor staff' and that in place of the unit the College would 'make available ... one of the alternate sleep over rooms'.

The person refused to vacate the unit asserting that her occupancy was governed by the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act. Whilst the decision turns on its own particular facts and in particular the provisions of the Queensland legislation in relation to the definitions of relevant terms, these general comments are of some assistance more generally.

'A purported tenant's degree of control over premises is crucial to the question of tenan-

cy' (this is consistent with the common law as well as statutory provisions reflecting that).

The decision maker found that the person's 'control of the unit was insufficient to bring her occupancy within the meaning and intent of the Act' and that no other consideration (the relevant section) outweighed that conclusion.

The Tribunal, in effect, found that the earlier decision by an 'adjudicator' was one that was open to the adjudicator to make and that that was 'enough to decide the case'. However the decision maker added his useful comments.

'According to the employment contract, the duration and security of (the person's) occupation of the unit was at the sole discretion of the College – a decision of discretion at the College, in the circumstances, exercised patiently and temperately. From the moment that (the person) accepted the College's offer of employment, she was on notice that her accommodation was contingent upon availability, and that she might, at any time, be required to yield to 'the needs of the boarding house.'

Whilst, as indicated above, this case turns on its own particular considerations, it is a good illustration of the importance to both parties of making sure that they each understand, and each has the same understanding, the nature of the legal rights which arise from the arrangement.



## Being the Girlfriend Magazine Psychologist...

AUTHOR  
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A recent survey asked young people who they turn to for advice when they need help and unsurprisingly the generation born with a mouse in their hand, turned most to the internet, followed by parent/s and then magazines.

Not that I needed it, but the importance of magazines in the lives of these young people vindicated my decision back in 2003 to accept the offer to take on writing for Girlfriend magazine's "Advice" columns. Despite some disparaging remarks from colleagues, I regarded this then - and still do - as an exceptional opportunity, which would afford me the opportunity to deliver evidence based and hopefully ethical advice directly to over eighty thousand young women - each month - as they struggle with the vicissitudes of teenage life.



The initial response of most people, upon learning that I have been dispensing advice in Girlfriend for over a decade is, "Are the questions made up?" to which the answer is "no" - the magazine receives thousands of emails to its advice columns every week and even the occasional communication by snail mail.

The upside of writing for Girlfriend is that I know more about Justin Bieber and One Direction than most grown men. But there are some downsides to the role. One is that the moral, ethical and legal dilemmas that our readers sometimes serve up can be tortuous and often require widespread consultation with a plethora of colleagues who

thankfully are generous enough to offer their perspective. After all, what do you say to a 14-year-old who comes home early and finds her mother in bed with a neighbour? Not to mention the 15-year-old who finds her father watching teen porn? Sometimes you just don't have enough specific details to offer detailed guidance - so you reluctantly have to settle for offering generic advice - usually around accessing help from a trusted adult.

The other problem, which often plays on my mind is the delay between the time the writer seeks help and the time at which the answers are published. Logic dictates that sometimes the particular dilemma might have resolved itself one way or another by the time Girlfriend hits the newsstands. I take some comfort in the fact that increasingly young people contact Girlfriend via social media and there is a editorial protocol of referring them to Kids Helpline or aheadspace.

Finally, in an era where the proliferation and globalisation of sexual imagery is overlapping with childhood, Girlfriend magazine has an important role to play in shaping the environment in which young women grow up. There is no doubt that adult sexual concepts are increasingly seeping into the lives of children, well before they're cognitively or developmentally equipped to process this information and as commentators like Melinda Tankard-Reist and Steve Biddulph correctly point out - it is an imposition on a childhood to have to try and understand or comprehend this imagery and sexual messaging that they are so often bombarded with.

I am conscious as a psychologist of the hyper sexualised messaging which pervades young women's lives. More and more girls are wanting breast implants because they are dissatisfied with their natural bodies, the power of the marketers is so strong that some end up making girls feel bad about the body. More and more of my clients despise their own bodies, and the results can be seen in the statistics with one in 100 girls anorexic, one in five bulimic and one in four want to have cosmetic surgery. Sometimes it seems self-hatred has become a rite of passage for many teenage girls.

In the past I worried that the magazines like Girlfriend and Dolly have contributed to this culture. But Girlfriend's fiercest critics have to admit that it has undergone some significant changes in the decade that I have been with



# Being the Girlfriend Magazine Psychologist...

it. Girlfriend has been running “reality checks” since 2006. These are media literacy tools – that graphically indicate when an image has (or hasn’t) been retouched, when readers have been used in a shoot, and they also let the reader know just how much time and effort goes into getting the ‘perfect’ shot (ie: it took four hours, 123 shots and a professional hair and makeup team to get this one shot).

Girlfriend alone now only uses models in one shoot per month (main fashion) opting instead to use readers who represent our demographic more accurately. In addition, it is currently running ‘Project YOU’ a campaign designed to help boost self-esteem, increase confidence and offer young people the opportunity to experience wellbeing. This campaign was introduced by the current editor Sarah Tarca, in response to readers telling the magazine that overcoming poor self-esteem was the biggest challenge they faced, which also comes through strongly in the Mission Australia data.

Many parents ask me at what age their offspring should be permitted to read the magazine - expressing consternation about whether the content is suitable. First, age does not always indicate maturity but second I believe

that Girlfriend’s current editor and staff are hypervigilant to ensure that the content is appropriate for our demographic. If I had girls, I probably wouldn’t allow them to read the magazine if they were prepubertal, there being better alternatives like Total Girl.

“Are the questions made up?”

My bookshelves at home are overflowing with Girlfriend magazines and easily outstrip text books, psychology journals and my holiday reading. For every “despairing” young woman writing to me each month, for every direct or heart-wrenching, hilarious, strange or even downright ludicrous question that comes my way, they are all moving reminders of what is so amazing about adolescents.



## Making Connections - Technology in Boarding

AUTHOR  
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I was recently out to lunch and sitting at the adjacent table were a group of friends, perhaps of middle secondary school age. Our food arrived around the same time and as I hungrily attacked my meal, I began to observe a very different ritual unfolding at our neighbour's table. With an almost synchronized display of eagerness, smartphones were held at the ready, having been easily accessible as they all sat atop the table, jostling for space amongst the salt and pepper. One girl began to move and manipulate her food as she worked out her fish & chips' "best side" for its Instagram photo shoot, whilst another quickly updated her Facebook status to inform all those who had been deemed worthy "friends" that she was currently having a better time than they were. Texting and tweeting and touchups of their lunch continued for some time as I continued to devour my meal, this behaviour in my periphery distracting me somewhat. Before too long, phones were once again set down for a brief rest and one of them exclaimed with disappointment "My lunch has gone cold!"

Technology's ubiquity in modern society is inescapable. It invades our meal times, family life, social life and school life. For digital natives, however, who have grown up not knowing a world without such ready access to technology, it is an almost essential element of day-to-day living. Taking away a teenager's access to the Internet is now tantamount to cutting them off from their entire world, or 'social network'. Technology has not invaded Australian teenager's lives so much as it has been compulsorily introduced by the implementation of the Digital Education Revolution (DER), launched by Kevin Rudd in 2007. Since then, schools across the country have been gradually adapting to students from Year 9-12 having their own personal laptop. Beyond just personal computers, the rapid uptake of smartphones doubled last year, with 9.2 million Australians going online via their phones in 2012. The challenge presented by this ever-increasing prevalence of technology is how to manage its use so that students can both harness its power, whilst also being aware of its drawbacks and dangers if not used appropriately.

Having worked in the boarding community for almost a decade now, I have witnessed first hand the dramatic shift occurring in social interactions and learning abilities since the introduction of the DER several years ago. Whilst in the boarding house recently,



a student asked me the definition for a word relating to their homework. When I suggested they go look it up in the dictionary, they exclaimed that they couldn't because their wi-fi wasn't working. This simple response was indicative of a mindset of many students who have now become so reliant on technology that their ability to approach situations in the old fashioned analogue way are completely alien. In a recent survey I conducted, results indicated that students were now more likely to ask Google a question than a teacher or parent. For staff, both in the classroom and the boarding environment, educating students to be good 'digital citizens' is now integral to a modern education. With schools incorporating laptop use across the curriculum and smartphones being an almost indispensable tool for boarders living away from home, staff need to be at the forefront of managing a medium that is constantly evolving. This is no mean feat, with the students in our care often far more tech-savvy than the 'digital immigrant' adults tasked with their pastoral and academic welfare.

The challenge presented to students is one that they cannot possibly be expected to undertake on their own and the best approach for educators is to be proactive, engaged and involved. Teenagers have been presented with an educational resource that offers collaborative and creative capabilities beyond anything students have enjoyed in the history of education. However, the line between a laptop being a tool for learning and a device for recreation is increasingly difficult for young minds to delineate. I know the challenge myself that working online can present. As I type, I'm constantly bombarded by an overflowing inbox, accompanied by the cacophony of



# Making Connections

## - Technology in Boarding

beeps and bells chiming across an array of social networking sites. If I deviate from the task at hand, I know that checking a simple link sent from a friend could lead me down a path of distraction that will take me further and further away from the job I sat down at my computer to complete. Having dedicated several years to studying the impact that technology can have on behaviour, I am all too aware of its vices. So one must question how a developing teenage mind can remain just as focused when distractions from an online existence are an almost constant for them. Not maintaining connections online is almost, if not more, socially troublesome than the trials of the traditional schoolyard. This increasing dependence on technology and a yearning for validation through intangibles such as 'Likes' and 'Friend counts' is contributing to issues such as internet addiction, an inability to maintain focus on specific tasks and a considerable impact on absorbing content in the classroom and beyond.

Boarding staff are therefore responsible for ensuring that students are aware of the implications of technology misuse and develop effective strategies to manage it. Limiting internet access to specified times, enforcing log off periods before bed, providing school networks that offer safe and secure internet use and monitoring students' wellbeing are all essential measures that need to be taken. Gone are the days of being able to identify

bullying simply by witnessing the actions and behaviour of students. Students are now at the behest of bullies and detractors whenever they log on and adults are often left completely oblivious to any such torment. Educating students in how to behave when using social media and adapting real world skills and expectations to their digital landscape will encourage them to interact safely and sensibly online. If we present the students in our care with this technology, then the onus is on us as educators to ensure that it is used in the best possible way. If we are unable to do this, then we have failed to successfully prepare young people for life in the 21st Century.

**“It invades  
our meal  
times,  
family life,  
social life and  
school life”**





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**Fresh & Healthy**

## BRAISED CHICKEN CACCIATORE POT PIE WITH

## FENNEL AND CARRAWAY SEED PASTRY CRUST

We would like to share one of our signature recipes for the winter season, which is being enjoyed by our boarding communities, and welcome you to try it out for yourself.

**MAKES: 10 POT PIES**

### INGREDIENTS & BASIC PREPARATION

Olive Oil – 40ml

Chicken Thigh Fillets – 10 thigh fillets – Remove skin, excess fat and sinew, and cut into a 3cm dice

Brown Onion, large – 200gm – Peel, halve and cut into a 2cm dice

Garlic Cloves – 4 cloves – Peel, and finely chop

Dried Mixed Herbs – 1/2tsp

Celery Stalks – 200gm – Rinse, drain, and cut into a 2cm dice

Carrots – 400gm – Peel, and cut into a 1cm dice

Rindless Bacon – 100gm – Cut into a 2cm dice

Button Mushrooms – 250gm – Rinse, drain, and halve

Tomato Paste – 300gm

White Wine – 100ml

Crushed Tinned Tomatoes – 800gm

Chicken Stock – 500ml

Balsamic Vinegar – 80ml

Rosemary – 1 x 6cm sprig – Rinse, drain and lightly crush

Kalamata Olives – 200gm – Pitted, and roughly chop

Sea Salt and Freshly Ground Black Pepper – To taste

Vegetable Spray Oil – As required

Puff Pastry, pre-rolled – 10 discs – Cut into 10cm diameter discs

Eggs – 2 eggs – Cracked, yolk and white separated, and yolk whisked

Fennel Seeds – ½ tsp

Caraway Seeds – ½ tsp

Sea Salt – ¼ tsp

### METHOD

1. Pre-heat an oven to a moderate temperature – 160c.
2. Over a high heat, in a saucepan, heat 20ml of the oil, then add the chicken and sauté until it is well browned on all sides, then remove it from the saucepan and set to one side.
3. Utilising the same saucepan, heat the remaining 20ml of oil, then add the onion, garlic, dried mixed herbs, celery, carrot, bacon and mushrooms, and sauté stirring regularly until the vegetables have softened.
4. Add the tomato paste and whilst stirring ‘cook out’ for 2 minutes.
5. Add the wine, crushed tomato, chicken stock, vinegar, rosemary and seared chicken. Bring the sauce up to the boil, then reduce the heat, and allow it to simmer gently for 20 minutes.
6. Add the olives and continue to simmer gently for a further 5 minutes or until the chicken and vegetables are cooked through and the sauce has thickened to a consistency that lightly ‘coats the back of a spoon’. Season to taste with salt and pepper, remove the chicken Cacciatore mixture from the heat, and carefully remove and discard the rosemary sprig.
7. Spray oil a roasting tray, place the puff pastry discs slightly separated onto the tray.
8. Brush the top of the pastry discs with the whisked egg yolks.
9. Lightly sprinkle the pastry discs with fennel seeds, caraway seeds and a little sea salt, place into the oven and bake for 15 minutes or until the pastry has risen and is a golden brown, then remove from the oven and allow to cool.
10. Gently re-heat the chicken Cacciatore mixture, and serve each 250gm portion, topped with a crusted pastry lid.
11. Alternatively the chicken Cacciatore mixture, once cooked, can be fully cooled and individual ‘pot pies’ can be made in ramekins or pie dishes and cooked in a moderately heated oven - 160c for 35-40 minutes or until the chicken Cacciatore mixture has heated through and the pastry lid has risen and is a golden brown, then serve immediately.

## Trainee Teachers

AUTHOR  
Jane Horne  
Director of Boarding  
The Hamilton and Alexandra College

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**“Attract  
teachers  
in training  
to country  
schools”**

In 2006 The Hamilton and Alexandra College was involved in a Pilot Program to attract teachers in training to rural and regional areas by offering them accommodation and support for the duration of their teaching round. This Pilot program was accepted after a one year trial and has now been in operation at the College for six years.

The teacher training is funded by the Federal Government with an allocation to Independent Schools Victoria annually.

The purpose of the program is to attract teachers in training to country schools, specifically in the Hamilton area, so they can experience the benefits of what was called a “Country Round” in the old days. Hamilton is about a four hour drive west of Melbourne, and in the past we had some difficulty attracting student teachers, but now we are turning them back.

Accommodation is provided at The Hamilton and Alexandra College in independent units within the Boarding House precinct for the period of their round. All meals and basic internet connectivity are provided by the Boarding House. This enables pre service teachers to become fully involved in school and boarding life, they can teach in a rural school and enjoy the pleasant surroundings and get a feel for the local community and rural life.

This provides opportunity to discover an exciting and beautiful part of Victoria, which is in close proximity to the Grampians, Port Fairy,

Warrnambool, the Great Ocean Road as well as the Coonawarra wine area and the delights of South Australia only 1.5 hours further west. There are four schools in Hamilton that offer placement to the pre service teachers, The Hamilton and Alexandra College, Monivae College, Good Shepherd College and Baimbridge College. All schools are in close proximity to The Hamilton and Alexandra College Boarding Houses.

As the Director of Boarding it has been a very interesting and rewarding experience hosting enthusiastic pre service teachers and we have gained much from each teacher’s stay. Our boarders are always delighted to have young people in residence; we do tend to have an older staff as the young ones move to the city for uni and work. Many of the student teachers gain confidence to apply for positions in rural schools and have in fact secured employment due to the very positive experience they have had in Hamilton.

It has been, and will continue to be, a most valuable program, utilising the resources of our Boarding House to strengthen ties with universities and trainee teachers, to promote positive links between teacher training institutions and schools and to improve the quality of teaching and boarding in rural schools.

We have been delighted to host Tom Dunsmore from ABSA for his “Experience of Boarding” as an adjunct to this scheme.





# Calrossy Anglican School

AUTHOR  
Steve Martin  
Director of Development  
Calrossy Anglican School

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Calrossy Anglican School has been providing a home away from home for girls for 94 years. We have, of course, developed a wealth of experience over this time and due to overwhelming demand introduced boarding for Secondary Boys in 2010.

**“A home  
away from  
home for girls  
for 94 years”**

“This was an exciting and iconic time in the history of Calrossy Anglican School” said school principal, Mrs Elisabeth Jackson. “The introduction of boys boarding completes the picture for the school as we can now offer families the complete package for all their children. Many families currently have to split their girls and boys between schools and often between towns. We can meet all their needs at the one school and they can take advantage of our generous sibling discount scheme! The boarding facilities are, of course, quite separate with the girls being located on or very near the Brisbane Street campus, while the boys are in Tribe Street,



boarding at Calrossy Anglican School and it is a dream come true to be involved at this time in the history of the school with the commencement and growth of secondary boys boarding. We are determined that the Christian values and morals that have underpinned the development of our boarding model will be evident in all areas of the Calrossy boarding experience for boys, as it is for our girls”.

The last two years have also seen a brand new boarding house for secondary girls and ongoing renovation and upkeep of the existing facilities. Many families comment on the excellent standard of the boarding facilities at Calrossy – particularly the spacious, light filled rooms, the presentation of the bathrooms and common areas and the overall warm and friendly atmosphere. “The boarding houses



not far at all from the Secondary Boys Campus on the Moore Creek Rd” Mrs Jackson said. “We have a rich heritage and the Christian, Personal and Caring values that underpin all we do are nowhere more evident than in the boarding houses.”

Head of Boarding Mrs Courtney Coe said “We have a long and distinguished history of

are a place where we provide our students with a home away from home. They feel safe and secure along with being genuinely cared for by our staff. We take very seriously Christ’s directive and example of ‘love your neighbour as yourself’ and use this as the foundation for social interaction within the boarding houses and throughout the school” said Mrs Jackson.

# Coming Events

## AUS

### 10 August 2013

Tasmania State Conference  
Springvale Accommodation, Hobart

### 18-19 August 2013

Leaders in Residential Communities Symposium  
Crown Complex, Perth

### 4-5 October 2013

New South Wales State Conference  
The Scots College, Sydney

### 21 October 2013

Queensland State Conference  
Ipswich Girls Grammar School

## NZ

### 29-31 May 2013

NZBSA Annual Conference  
'Tools of the Trade'  
Auckland

## USA

### 20 July 2013

This is the Life! Boot Camp  
Boston

### 23 July 2013

New Teacher Academy  
Admissions Academy and Residential Life Academy  
Boston

### 5-7 December 2013

Annual Conference  
Boston

## UK

### 8-10 July 2013

Annual Conference for Matrons & Medical Staff  
Cranage Hall, Cheshire

### 24-25 November 2013

SBSA Annual Conference  
Norfolk

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