

lights out

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Lessons from a Dragon

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We all have our fears. Some are rational, others are not. A number of students are new to our boarding houses and may not yet know enough about our schools to understand that many of their fears are unfounded. Boarding staff will need to make certain that these fears are dispelled by warmth, acceptance and a hot cup of chocolate.

Lesson 2

"If the lion and the dragon fight, both will die." - unknown dragon

One of the features of so many boarding communities is their cultural diversity. Some people might be threatened by this. I see it as a strength because it gives our communities the variety necessary to ensure students are prepared for the real world. Because it is a multi-cultural world, our boarders must learn to operate with those that are different. They need to tread the world stage or else be condemned to insignificant roles in regional theatres. The lion of the West must not fight the dragon of the East, or else both will die. Let's ensure that racism has no place within our boarding communities.

Lesson 3

"To attract good fortune, spend a new penny on an old friend, share an old pleasure with a new friend and lift the hearts of your students by writing their names on the wings of a dragon." - unknown dragon

This is not an invitation to graffiti a dragon! It is an invitation to honour old friends. It is a request that you make new friends. It is a plea to honour your students. Pastoral care is at the heart of what we do in our boarding schools. Most students have difficulties with some element of their schooling. Staff need to help tame these difficulties. They need to work with their charges and carry them to fresh heights.

Lesson 4

"May the dragon of life only roast your hot-dogs and never burn your buns."

The dragon of the West is reputedly an unpleasant beast that fully deserves its comeuppance at the hand of heroes like St George. The St George dragon was a plague-bearing beast that had to be fed

Dragons are clever things. When I was a boarder, a dragon would visit me at night. By day, it would change itself into a dressing gown hanging on the door. As I said – dragons are clever things. Check your dressing gown. There might be bones in the pocket. All this brings me to the first lesson from a dragon.

Lesson 1

"Meddle not in the affairs of the dragon; for you are crunchy and taste good with ketchup." - unknown dragon

Hmm ... I hear you say, but there are no dragons. David Whiteland, in his *Book of Pages* (adapted) writes:

Some will be tempted to think dragons are fictitious because – despite their size – nobody seems to have actually seen one. And so it is necessary from time to time to provide evidence: a burnt tree or two, a splintered rock, the mysterious absence of a villager. These events convince of the existence of dragons because the people do not know enough about the world to understand that dragons do not exist."



two sheep a day lest it will kill the villagers of Silene in Libya. When the sheep ran out, the villagers fed their children to the dragon. When the King's daughter, Sabra, was to be sacrificed, she was taken to the lake wearing a bridal gown. Just before she was devoured, our hero trotted up and slew the dragon with his mighty sword – which was called Ascalon – the name Winston Churchill called his personal aircraft in World War II. But I digress.

2012 celebrates the dragon of the East and ushers in one of the most powerful signs of the Chinese Zodiac. Occurring only once every twelve years, the Year of the Dragon introduces a pleasant reptile that roasts hot-dogs rather than burns buns. Chinese dragons are good news. They are strong, creative and energetic. They bring luck and leadership. Bruce Lee, John Lennon and Russell Crowe were all born in the Year of the Dragon.

Let's also strive to be good news this year and be leaders within our boarding community. Let's set big, hairy, audacious goals. Let's also be strong, creative and energetic in the exercise of our duties. These are not easy times. The schools that survive will be the schools with good luck and good leadership.

The Chinese Dragon may be good news – but not perfectly good news. Of his 117 scales, 81 are said to be of the positive 'yang' essence. The other 36 are of the troublesome 'yin' essence – which brings me to final lesson ...

Lesson 5

"Never laugh at live dragons." - J R R Tolkien

Don't ever think there are things that can't harm us in the boarding world. With schools seen as lucrative legal targets, with the complexities wrought by ever increasing red-tape and bureaucratic obligations, and with cold fiscal breezes freezing enrolments, we need to nurture the reputation of our boarding schools with care.

The Chinese New Year started on 23 January 2012. A number of customs are commonly followed at the start of a Chinese New Year. There might be benefit in following a few of them:

- Wear new clothes. (Those boarders in new school uniforms look splendid!)
- Be on your best behaviour. (Enough said.)
- Keep an empty seat at the table. (To remind us that not everyone can enjoy a great education in a boarding school, so let's be grateful for what we've got.)
- Get rid of past grudges.

I wish you well in this Year of the Dragon, and trust that within it, you may enjoy great fulfilment within your respective boarding communities.

"Heroes take journeys, confront dragons, and discover the treasure of their true selves." - Carole Lynn Pearson

1. Dr T F Hawkes, Chairman, Australian Boarding Schools Association

"Never laugh at live dragons."

- J R R Tolkien

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GOLD COAST



Surviving Year 12

AUTHOR

Dr Michael Carr-Gregg
Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychologist

ishment, about 70 percent of what they had been told was at best inaccurate and, at worst, alarmist claptrap.

I am not sure if I was more bamboozled by the inaccuracy of what they had been told or the vehemence with which they had been told it. What would induce friends and relatives to regale them with such balderdash? There were two possibilities: either these harbingers of doom were former students (siblings) who had got through and were just big-noting themselves; or – horror of horrors – maybe they actually believed this stuff.

The next year, I was invited back to speak to the same school's next generation of Year 12s. Curious, I asked them to write down what they had been told about the final years of school – and once again it appeared they had been the victims of a similar mantra full of pious obfuscation.

Having spoken to thousands of final year students as I travel around Australia I have discovered that 'beating up' the final year or two of school has become something of a national pastime, fuelled by the parents, media and a genuine, if misplaced, belief among friends and relatives that their exaggerated views are factual and in some way provide motivation to the beleaguered final year student.

The perpetrators of this doughnut drooling inanity seem to have three main themes. First, this will undoubtedly be the most stressful year of your life. Second, do not think that you can have a social life this year, as success will only come from hours of work, with one's nose resolutely to the academic grindstone. Nothing less than ceaseless toil will suffice. Third, what happens this year will determine the rest of your life. In other words, your final score will be the sole determinant of whether you are a successful human being.

A few years ago, I was asked to talk to a group of young women at their orientation for the final year of high school. These girls were staring down the barrel of Year 12 at a selective state school, and talking to them afterwards over a cup of tea, I was taken back by their level of angst, most of the girls I talked to seemed caught up in a maelstrom of anxiety and stress. I was more used to seeing this level of stress among my patients, who – because of mental health problems such as depression and anxiety – often have difficulties dealing with the challenges of everyday life. So I asked the girls what they had been told by friends and relatives about what to expect from the final year of school, to my aston-

ishment, about 70 percent of what they had been told was at best inaccurate and, at worst, alarmist claptrap.

Putting aside the rather obvious fact that these observations aren't very useful or even terribly accurate, in many students they induce a sense of anxiety and dread, which is profoundly unhelpful. The final years of school have probably always been stressful, but now there is increasing evidence that such stress is considerably magnified because of the hype and blah surrounding the final year. In January 2003, the New South Wales Commissioner for Children and Young People called for an 'urgent investigation' of how to support young people during the final year of school, after the State Government Child Death Review Team commissioned an expert report analysing 111 adolescent suicides in NSW. The report found

that pressure to perform in the Higher School Certificate (HSC) contributed to one in eleven adolescent suicides in the state.

Furthermore, a study conducted at Coventry University in the UK and released in 2003 confirmed that the stress caused by exams can be potentially damaging for young people unless they employ effective coping mechanisms. Research carried out with A-level (final year) students found that over half of the young people questioned stated that they found exams very or extremely stressful. Many reported health problems linked to exam stress, including loss of sleep, loss of appetite, headaches and nausea, and a tendency to binge on both food and drink. Worryingly, eight percent of the young people interviewed said they had suicidal thoughts brought on by the stress of exams. Given the research and the anxiety over the issue, it now seems more necessary than ever to provide realistic and helpful advice to final year students and their families. Being a young person in the twenty-first century, with the tectonic social changes that coincide with the onset of puberty, is hard enough without these added pressures. Across Australia, parents feel almost as daunted by the final years of school as their offspring do, and are looking for answers to the challenge that these years present.

The vital message to a young person in the final years of school is that while they need to work hard, they should also focus on their emotional well being. Year 12 parents need to discard the vulture-like mindset of standing over students, ready to swoop if they have the temerity to watch their favourite TV show. or spend a few hours on Facebook.

The fact is that there is always a side door by which we can achieve our life's goals. History is replete with highly successful figures who either never completed school or whose final years were less than distinguished. They matured later. For instance, no fewer than eight US Presidents never finished high school, yet later learnt the skills needed to be President. This is not to say that the final year of school is wasted. Not at all. The smart money is on young people who have the desire and ability to complete their final year, as it does open up more options in life later on.

It is crucial that the adults in their life de-tune the hyperbole and get the facts on how parents and students can combine to help the latter get their personal best result. It is about sticking to basics: making sure students eat right, and get plenty of sleep and regular exercise, and negotiate with parents upfront about expectations. One of the greatest stressors for the final year



Surviving Year 12



student is parent–student relations. The best advice is for students to begin a negotiation by stating what they want from their parents during the year. The ideal situation is one in which the parents are respectful of what the student is doing, and are sufficiently supportive to create a psychological space at home in which to study.

With a little cooperation, parents can be encouraged to adopt an attitude of ‘I’m here to help and offer any advice I can when you need it’. This will dramatically increase the likelihood of the final year student seeking their support – far more than if parents seek to impose draconian rules and regulations. Talk to any young person and they will confirm that such parental behaviour and attitudes are far more likely to trigger defensiveness within the student and shut down communication completely.

While some students will benefit from the odd gentle reminder and encouragement to stick to a predetermined study schedule, parents need to avoid getting into the habit of nagging and carping – incessantly telling the final year student that they are socialising too much, not doing enough work, etc. This will ensure a year of conflict, frustration and anger, possibly creating feelings of intense anger and even hatred in their son or daughter that may or may not dissipate over time.

This is not to say that parents should vanish into the background. Showing an interest in

students’ progress indicates that their parents are interested and do care – a cup of tea and an encouraging word can do wonders. Positive reinforcement is the key, so when the parents see a good effort being made it is useful to praise the student for it, showing them that their dedication has been noticed. This encourages them to work this way. Together you can form a formidable team.

Of course, one of the great advantages of boarding in Year 12, is that the parent factor is largely removed and the peer pressure, opportunities to exercise, play combined with the routine and structure around study times provide students with an unparalleled opportunity to do their best. For some families, boarding in Year 12 is a life saver. Regardless of where they do Year 12, the key message for all students embarking on the Year 12 journey in 2012 must be that the sun and the moon and the stars do not revolve around what happens at the end of the year, life will still be worth living irrespective of the end result. You are not your ATAR. Remember. the only week anyone will ever ask you what your score was - is the week the results come out, so if you have not done as well as you would have liked, go on holiday!

Dr Michael Carr-Gregg has just published “Surviving Year 12 - a sanity kit for students and their parents” Finch Publications 2012 (2nd edition) with a foreword by Dr Tim Hawkes

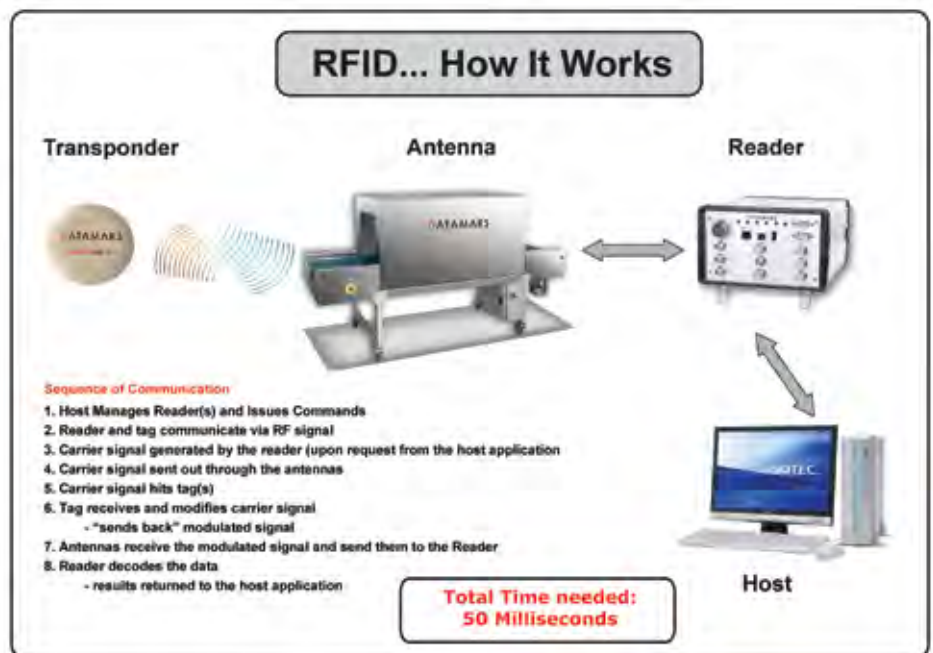
FOLLOW Michael on Twitter @MCG58

Never lose another sock again with Texco Track

AUTHOR
Michael Johns
Strategic Sales

As you know or might guess one of the many challenges of managing a boarding school laundry is ensuring that the clothing you receive is returned to the right student, in a timely manner and in a condition you can be proud of. This may sound easy but with hundreds of garments being processed every day it is very difficult to manage with a manual tracking system.

Boarding schools everywhere try to manage the laundering and tracking of student's clothing using well-known methods of identification such as stitch or stick on labels, permanent markers and the like. Most of these methods are unsuitable due to their performance in the laundry environment, their effect on the integrity of the garment or their requirement for a high level of manual intervention.



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Texco provides a proven garment laundry tracking solution that uses RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) technology to identify each item of clothing which can then be tracked every time the item of clothing is presented and dispatched from the laundry.

An RFID system comprises a reader, its antenna and transponders (tags) that carry the data. The reader transmits a low-power radio signal through its antenna, which is received by the tag via its own antenna and used to power an integrated circuit (chip). Using the energy it gets from the signal when it enters the radio field, the tag will briefly converse with the reader for verification and exchange data. Once the data is received by the reader, it is then sent to a controlling computer for processing and management.

Texco Track uses small RFID tags that are durable, discreet and easily attached to the underside of a printed thermal label, which also allows for a visual reference. The thermal label can be easily removed without damaging the garment once the tag is no longer required.

Once the RFID tag is attached it is then tracked for the life of the garment which allows the students or boarding houses, details to be updated as they move rooms, ensuring extra care to be taken on particular garments, or to reunite socks once they have been separated from their partners.

If you are laundering off site it also allows for like items to be counted into the laundry and then batched for bulk washing. This allows for efficient and effective washing of all garments with no risk of losing items. When the garments are ready to be sorted it is a simple process to scan the items for quick and accurate identification so that Little Johnny's socks are always returned with the rest of the clean clothes that he sent to the laundry.

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Texco RFID Tracking Solutions – you will never lose another sock.



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Implementing change and establishing a positive culture

AUTHOR
Tim Agnew
Head of Boarding, Prince Alfred College

In May last year I wrote an article that appeared in this publication on 'Distributive Leadership in a Boarding House setting', which tracked the process that had occurred to implement a new staffing structure in response to a comprehensive review into boarding at Prince Alfred College (PAC). Nine months later I am in a position to reflect upon the changes that this new structure has brought about and to criti-

conclusion that the existing staffing structure was inadequate for the needs of the boys and frankly unsustainable, given the excessive load it placed on key staff. Twelve months have passed since the new structure came into existence and the verbal feedback throughout the course of last year from the staff involved, the boys and their families has been very positive. For instance, we know from feedback received



cally evaluate the impact that this has had, particularly with reference to establishing a positive culture. However, before I go further I do need to make clear that what we as a College set out to achieve is certainly not complete and as part of the on-going evaluation process a number of key stakeholders, notably the students, their parents and the boarding staff will be surveyed over the next few months. The aim of this is to gather both quantitative data and anecdotal comments to determine if 'the reality' supports our current perception.

Implementing change for 'change's sake' is generally not educationally sound and it can even be counter-productive. The change we implemented was the result of reaching the

that the new staff have quickly settled into the boarding community and it is a better one for the initiatives they have introduced and the expertise they have employed whilst developing their new role. The major roles created have been in the areas of boarding activities, wellbeing, ICT and aviation, academic support and support for international students.

Logistically the leadership and management of the change introduced from the commencement of 2011 has required a significant time commitment but it has been aided by the high quality of the staff employed by the College to work in the new roles within the Boarding House. Like all boarding schools, I suspect, we meet regularly as a staff to discuss issues



Implementing change and establishing a positive culture



their understanding of the boarding community and the College's strategic goal for boarding: 'To develop a Boarding House of excellence'. Each of the meetings has, in my opinion, contributed to the positive culture that currently exists within our boarding community.

It is very clear to me that a happy boarder is likely to be a successful boarder, with respect to them embracing and benefiting from all that our schools can offer. Undoubtedly, a very large part of a boarder being happy is them feeling, safe, cared for and supported. To achieve this requires much planning and hard work, and a positive environment. Establishing a positive culture in our boarding communities is certainly dependent upon numerous variables. At PAC this has certainly been the case and to summarize, this has developed through the College having a clear goal for boarding, the willingness to provide financial and professional support with respect to appointing and developing key staff in new roles, and of course, through sharing new initiatives with the students and their parents. Although I have not focused much on the final two groups in this paper, their support has been vital.

involving our students, operating procedures and upcoming events. At PAC a whole boarding staff meeting is held each fortnight, while in the alternate week just the senior staff meet, during which time they share an update of their area of responsibility. Throughout 2011, in addition to these regular group meetings I held one-one-one meetings with the latter, to ensure that the changes we sought to achieve could occur. These meetings were important in both the development of their role and in consolidating

1. Open Schools Knockout Cup winners 2011
2. Mitchell and Tim presenting packages to Amy
3. Year 11 lads



Healthy Habits for the Boarding School Student

AUTHOR
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When students attend school the normal expectation parents/carers have is for their child/children to be able to perform to their full academic and/or sporting potential throughout their schooling years.

In preparation to accomplishing great results, students should be aware of a number of healthy behaviours which can contribute to improved concentration, learning skills, memory, attentiveness and sustained energy levels. Common healthy habits include:

- **Regular physical activity** - According to the National Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians (2004), the recommendation for children/adolescents from ages of 5 to 18 years is to have at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day.



- **Sufficient rest and sleep** - *The Australian Centre for Education in Sleep (2008) recommends 10-12 hours sleep per day for primary school student and 9-11 hours sleep per day for high school students.*



- **Adequate nutritious food consumption** - In order to meet adequate nutritional requirements, the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating recommends children and adolescents enjoy a wide variety of foods including grainy foods; vegetables & legumes, fruit; dairy and meat & alternatives on a daily basis. The guidelines include individual serve sizes for each food group according to each gender and age category. The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating is currently under review, updated recommendations will be available later in 2012.



- **Drink plenty of water** - The human body is approximately 60% water content, it is lost through sweat, urine, and from the skin and breath on a daily basis. It is important to replace fluids regularly for overall health.

Water can also be found in foods, especially fruit and vegetables. However it is important to obtain water as a beverage every day. The recommendations for water consumption are as below:

Ages (years)	Approximate Daily Water Recommendations
5-8	1 litre
9-12	1.5 litres
13 and over	2 litres



- **Consuming breakfast** - Studies have shown that consuming breakfast has a short-term effect in improving cognitive skills such as attention span, alertness and memory. A balanced breakfast can provide the mental focus needed to start the day off right. Try to avoid high fat and sugar loaded breakfasts.

Suggestions of balanced breakfasts include:

- High fibre breakfast cereal with low fat milk and fruit
- Wholemeal/grain toast with fruit and a glass of low fat milk
- Fruit smoothie made with milk or yoghurt and fresh fruit
- Scrambled egg/ baked beans on grain toast
- Porridge with tinned fruit



It is important that healthy lifestyle behaviours and habits are established to ensure that students will have adequate nutrition to sustain their energy levels and attentiveness throughout the day. Adequate sleep, physical activity, good nutrition and regular meals all play a holistic part in good health and provide students with an optimal start to their day at school.

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For further questions on the article please contact: Jenny Pham APD, Scolarest Dietitian via: jennypham@compass-group.com.au



Canberra Grammar School renovates for the future

AUTHOR
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Head of Boarding
Canberra Boarding School

With the appointment of Dr Justin Garrick as Headmaster at the start of 2011, a focus was placed upon the strong boarding culture of the school. With twin boarding houses now some 35 years old and a boarding history

With extensive work done to enlarge and modernise bathrooms, boys needs are now better met and resemble a First class bathroom environment. The houses have been fitted with more common spaces and each of the three levels of the buildings fitted with desktop computers and wireless internet. Bright colours and furnishings bring a sense of brightness to hallways, which can cheer up a cold Canberra day.

Rooms have been fitted out with refurbished and new bedroom furniture, all of which have been incorporated to save money, energy and to ensure boys have best access to a private work and sleep environment. In addition, each of the six resident staff have had their apartments refurbished, a major attraction to staff wishing to be part of the community.

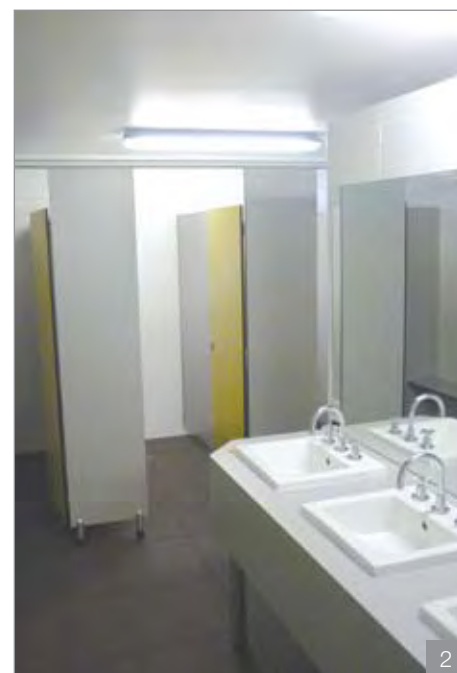
This renovation will see a new era of boarding in the nations capital and set a high standard of residential care at the school. Canberra Grammar School welcomes you to visit their website for further information regarding the boarding environment and their wider academic, sporting and cultural offerings.

1. Renovated dorm rooms
2. Renovated communal bathrooms



spanning 83 years, it was time to renovate for the future and the next phase of residential life. After consultation with the school community and new appointments of Mr Connor Barrett to the role of Head of Boarding and Mr Julian Jefferys as Assistant Head of Boarding, the school embarked on an extensive renovation of the buildings. This renovation has seen the overall capacity drop from 120 to 84 not filled, with few positions currently available.

A shift from dorm rooms to more contemporary single and double rooms meant that all boys from years 7-12 have benefitted. Restructuring of the two existing houses has meant that a new single pastoral house structure has been created with one building housing year 7-10 students and the other year 11-12 students. Within this structure boys of differing needs can be accommodated and the houses modified and run for the demands of its residents.



Enhancing Students' approaches to learning

AUTHOR

Paul Ginns (University of Sydney)
 Brad Papworth (ABSA)
 Andrew Martin (University of Sydney)

While the initial aim of the ABSA research was to measure the effect of boarding on academic and other personal development outcomes, this research has broader reach in understanding other effects influencing outcomes of school. Such is the strength of this research, due to the inclusion of day students and the longitudinal nature of the study, that this research can contribute to debate on Student Learning Theory. This theory has had a major impact on teaching practice and curriculum development in higher education, but may also help us understand effective learning in high schools.

In a previous Lights Out article (3[3] 2010), Understanding Approaches to Learning, we discussed two different approaches to learning taken by students. When a student uses the approach of Elaboration, he will attempt to relate what is to be learned to what he already knows, and explain to himself the real-world implications of the topic. In contrast, the approach of Memorization is underpinned by strategies (e.g. learning key terms; reading material aloud multiple times; learning to the point that material can be recited) where the goal is to create exact representations of to-be-learned information in long-term memory. The present study has measured students' tendencies to use these different strategies using self-report

questions developed for educational research by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (Marsh et al., 2006). Students using the Elaboration approach will be likely to agree with statements such as "When I study, I try to relate new material to things that I have learned in other subjects" and "When I study, I figure out how the material fits in with what I have already learned". In contrast, students using the Memorization approach will be likely to agree with statements such as "When I study, I try to memorize everything that might be covered" and "When I study, I practise by saying the material to myself over and over".

Both of these approaches to learning have their place, but educators often find students use Memorization approaches more frequently than Elaboration strategies. This can mean students are less likely to develop a deeper, more personally meaningful understanding of subject areas. As part of our ongoing investigation of boarding and day students, we are aiming to understand the factors associated with students' uses of these approaches to learning and this article provides a brief overview of our preliminary findings.

In investigating student approaches to learning we started with a theoretical model of learning – the 3P Model – developed by Professor John

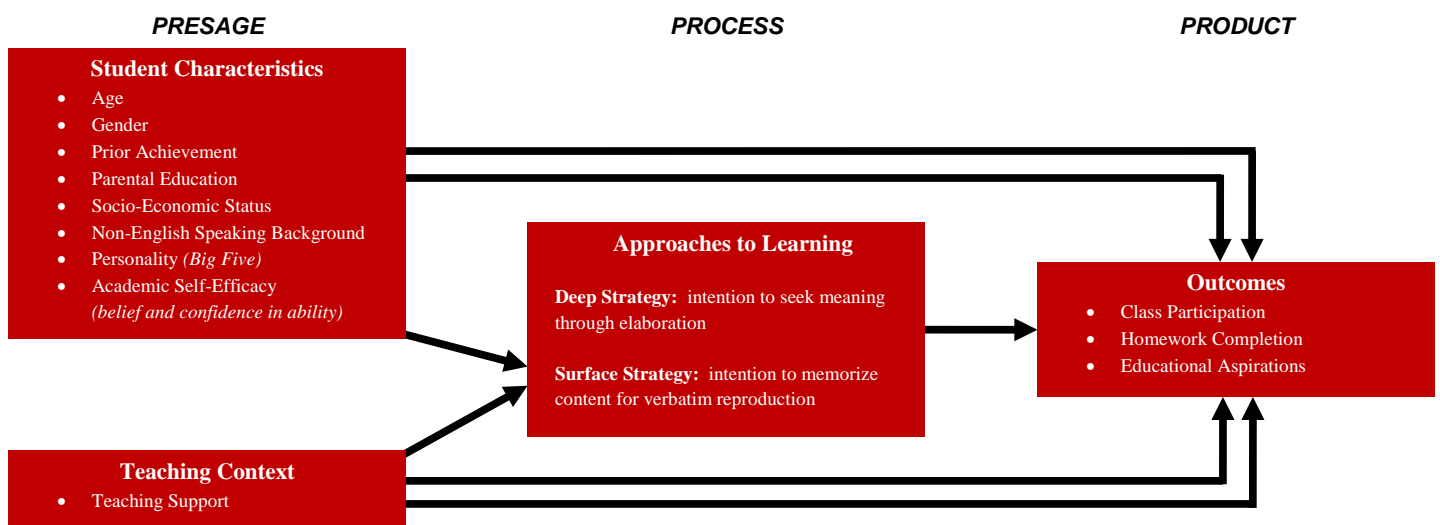


Figure 1: The 3P model of student approaches to learning highlights the impact of academic self-efficacy on student approaches to learning as well as class participation and educational aspirations. Teaching support was also found to have significant effect on approaches to learning and again on class participation and educational aspirations.



Enhancing Students' approaches to learning

Biggs. The 3P Model specifies relations between students' personal characteristics and their perceptions of the teaching and learning environment (Presage), the approaches to learning they take (Process), and the subsequent outcomes of learning (Product). Drawing on theories by Biggs and his colleagues, as well as recent discussion and meta-analytic reviews of educational research, we developed and tested a model (see Figure 1) with data from the ABSA research.

Based on our reading of research in this area, the above model is perhaps the most extensive test of the 3P model in high schools to date. What is unique to our analysis is the large sample of high school students (5000+) and their spread across 13 schools around Australia, which means that results are unlikely to be idiosyncratic to one school. Of particular note is the wide range of Presage (personal student) characteristics that were included in our study, including Personality (see Lights Out 2[2] 2009); whereas often previous research using the 3P model has included only a small number of these important background influences on student learning. The effects of these student characteristics, then, can be juxtaposed against the effect of how students experience the teaching context allowing us to investigate a number of important questions. Do students experience school as a place that supports their learning? And how do these Presage factors – both personal and school-based – relate to the approaches to learning they take, and key outcomes such as class participation, homework completion, and educational aspirations? The point of students attending school, including boarding school, is to achieve particular outcomes of learning.

Focusing on the key findings, the most important predictor of both Process and Product outcomes was a students' belief and confidence in her ability to achieve academically, to overcome obstacles, and to complete work to the best of her ability (Academic Self-Efficacy). This Presage factor had large effects on use of both Memorization strategies and Elaboration strategies, considerable effects on Class Participation and Educational Aspirations, and approaching moderate effect on Homework Completion. The personality factor of Conscientiousness – the drive to accomplish goals, characterised by self-discipline, forethought, and carefulness – had medium effects on use of both Memorization and Elaboration approach-

es, a large effect on Homework Completion, and a small effect on Class Participation. Of the demographic variables, perhaps the most consistent effect was of Age, which showed moderate negative impacts on Memorization and Class Participation (i.e., as students got older they reduced their use of memorization and class participation), and a medium to large effect on Homework Completion (i.e., as students got older they indicated a greater level of homework completion). However, Age also had a positive effect on Educational Aspirations; that is, educational aspirations became clearer in the upper years. The effects of the remaining student background variables were relatively small or statistically unreliable in comparison to the above results.

In contrast to the majority of student characteristics discussed above, the impact of students' perceptions of Teaching Support, an institutional variable, was quite clear. This predictor had medium to large effects on use of both Memorization strategies and Elaboration strategies, and large effects on Class Participation and Educational Aspirations, although only a moderate effect on Homework Completion.

The results outlined above, based on responses from a large, diverse sample of Australian adolescents, highlight the importance of schools and teachers in promoting learning Processes and Products. Schools and teachers can build Academic Self-Efficacy in a variety of ways. One key strategy is “chunking”, or breaking learning tasks down into smaller, more manageable pieces, then explicitly helping the student see the completion of each “chunk” as a success. Another strategy involves expanding the notion of success. Too often, schooling becomes a “zero-sum game” where only a small proportion of students “win” based on the highest grades. An expanded view of success, already emphasised in many schools, could take in notions of mastery, learning for its own sake, and personal bests (see Lights Out 3[2] 2010 Powerful Answers to Important Educational Questions). Likewise, our results demonstrate the importance of students clearly feeling supported in their learning by their teachers. Again, a range of strategies might be used here, including actively listening to students' views, affirming all students and their individuality, and having positive but attainable aspirations for all students. Lastly, while some students may be more conscientious than others, we believe many of the attributes of such

students can be learned. Our results also suggest helping students develop their organisational and goal-setting skills will improve both learning Processes and Products.

Learning in real school settings is undeniably complex, being driven by a wide range of different factors, including personality, demographic and institutional factors. However, the initial results we have discussed here strongly suggest that several factors under the control of schools – Academic Self-Efficacy and Teaching Support – are likely to have the strongest impacts on approaches to learning and learning outcomes. While there are no “magic bullets” in education, results such as these can help educators focus on a manageable set of factors which are most likely to yield gains for student learning.

For further information about this study, contact Brad Papworth: b.papworth@edfac.usyd.edu.au or (02) 9683 8490.

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The Dry Stone Wall

AUTHOR

Conrad Mathias

St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill



Dry stone walls can be commonplace enough in Australia, but are a regular feature of landscapes in Britain. Their construction requires significant skill, and their longevity repays such skill.

They became part of the landscape of post agrarian economies before wire became commercial, and when wood was expensive and getting rarer. There were hedges occasionally, but although dry stone walls were long in the making, they are long in the keeping and require little or no upkeep.

Barriers and boundaries form part of the life of boarding students the worldwide. They mimic to some extent their parallels in the classroom day and in home life, but because boarding really does become a whole of life issue for forty weeks of the year, it is necessary to have barriers to protect those who live in such communities, and occasionally to protect society beyond the boundaries.

We should be careful of what we expect of such boundaries. There's an old farming adage which states that "locks on gates are only to keep honest people out". Care must be

taken to ensure that the positioning of a boundary does what we want it to do, and no more. Boundaries should not be made of barbed wire so that they scratch the unwary traveller or the merely curious. Neither should they be hedges with hidden obstacles and patches of insufficient support. The boundary should be easy to see, to be seen for what it is, and above all, there should be gates at appropriate intervals.

The image of boundary and gate can be extended to the management of young people. Sheep (a limited metaphor, but a clever farm animal nonetheless) will always travel better in one direction than another – work out the direction and the task will be easier. Approach the gate properly, and they will travel calmly through it. Make the fence properly, and neither calf nor lamb will become entangled.

Finally, the dry stone wall will be a solid protection against dangers beyond, but there should be a dimension of shelter as well. The wire or the wood give little shelter, but the dry stone wall, long in the making, will reward the careful custodian by sheltering from the wind and weather those whom it seeks to protect in other ways.



Do computers prevent your students from trusting, giving respect and being honest?

AUTHOR
Ben Gelton
Former St Andrews College



Do computers prevent your students from trusting, giving respect and being honest?

A recent article in "Lights Out" issue 04 November 2011 appeared to suggest that this was the case when it comes to student leave. You might remember the movie 2001 A Space Odyssey. "Open the pod bay doors HAL... I can't do that Dave".

Have we missed the point? Leave in a boarding school is a serious thing. Generally not knowing where a student is at a given time is not something a parent is going to be that forgiving about. 99% of students know how to use technology to assist them live their lives. Should our focus be on the technology used to run a leave system, or on the purpose of monitoring leave in the first place?

A computerised system should facilitate an easier way to monitor that being trusted, respecting the rules and being honest about where you are going and what you are doing is deserved.

In the "Lights Out" article mentioned above I believe what the author was trying to say is

that extremes can exist. Tracking students without giving them opportunities to be trusted or failing to provide chances for them to develop the responsibility for organising and obtaining consent for their own leave defeats the purpose of allowing leave in the first place.

I strongly agree with this; what I can't see is the link between using a computer and the dilution of trust, respect or honesty. The fact is if students could be completely trusted all the time and nothing ever went wrong then there would be no need for any leave system at all. The students we are talking about are in their teenage years therefore "sometimes things don't go according to plan". We need to be able to take action if required so we need to know what is going on as we take the place of their parents when they live in our institutions.

My interest in this area is obviously vested as, my company Software Marketing (www.softwaremarketing.co.nz) has produced a solution to this problem. We have and continue to develop a product called LeaveRegister. During our early product development it became clear that taking a "boarding school is a prison" approach would not work with parents, students or the boarding house staff. We are much more interested in reducing boarding administration and improving decision making by facilitating information flow between all the groups involved and saving on wasted staff time in running their institutions.

So maybe it is time to open the pod bay doors. We are happy to show you how a computer can help with this. How fantastic would it be to have accurate meal numbers directly to your kitchen every meal in real-time, student rolls that are accurate to the second, an efficient process to handle all your weekend leave, student leave profile history at the touch of a button and peace of mind that all your students are accounted for.

My name is Ben Gelton, I worked for three years in St Andrews College (Christchurch New Zealand) assisting with the care of 60 boys aged 16 – 18 years in the senior hostel.

Boarding, the Future - Research Findings

AUTHOR
Kate Hadwen
Edith Cowan University

The 'Boarding, the Future' research project, funded by Healthway, and conducted by the Child Health Promotion Research Centre (CHPRC) at Edith Cowan University, aimed to better understand the unique challenges faced by boarding students, their families and staff. Information was gathered from boarders in Years 7 to 10 across ten boarding schools in Western Australia, through interviews, small focus groups and an online survey administered by staff at the CHPRC. The school

(64%) of students in Years 7-9 reported a preference for rooms comprising four or more students, whereas a small proportion (7%) of students in these year levels reported preferring single rooms. As students grow and mature they require more privacy; as demonstrated by the three-quarters (73%) of Year 10 students who reported preferring single rooms or two students to a room. Qualitatively, when interviewing families no parents felt single rooms were the best option for boarders when they first begin boarding, with the most common response from parents being four students living together, particularly in Years 7 and 8.

Debate has long reigned regarding the pros and cons of having different ages of boarders living in the one 'house'. In this study, almost half (44%) of boarders reported they preferred having only boarders in their year level living together, while one-quarter (25%) felt having 2-3 year levels sharing was preferable and the least popular view expressed by fewer students (20%) wanted all year levels living together. Of note, this statistic varied between schools with boarders' survey selections reflected their current living conditions.

Helpful activities BEFORE boarding

Schools and staff invest an enormous amount of time and energy planning and conducting activities to assist boarders to transition smoothly into their new environment. It is rewarding to know many of these activities are reported by students as being somewhat or very helpful. Topping the list were; tour of boarding house (95%), orientation day (94%), sleepover without parents (89%) [of note (30%) of students reported having a sleepover WITH parents before starting boarding as not at all helpful], starting school a day earlier (87%), mentoring program (84%) and having telephone communication with another boarding student before starting (82%). The effectiveness of mentoring programs varied significantly between schools indicating the quality of the program implemented in the school has a significant impact upon its effectiveness as a transitioning strategy.

During interviews and focus groups, families indicated the internet was important when initially seeking information regarding making a decision and short listing possible boarding schools for their children. In the survey more than half (56%) of boarders reported information provided to them over the internet was only somewhat helpful, and almost one-quarter (22%) of



sample included; government, non-government, single sex, co-educational, metropolitan and regional boarding facilities.

Seven themes were explored with students, including homesickness, transitioning, connectedness, bullying, attachment, academic support and perceived safety. This article will report on a selection of the findings regarding living arrangements, pre-boarding activities (transitioning) and homesickness.

Boarders and Living Arrangements

Recently, boarding facilities have come under pressure to make boarding more personalised with some speculating the most satisfactory rooming configuration is single rooms from entry age into the boarding house. This has been contravened by students who overwhelmingly prefer more students rather than fewer in the younger years of boarding. Almost two-thirds



Boarding, the Future

- Research Findings

boarders reported this information was not at all helpful. These findings appear to present an opportunity for schools to focus more energy on the information presented to prospective boarding families via their website.

Homesickness

Survey results varied significantly between girls and boys with regard to homesickness (see Homesickness and Girls below). Very few boarders reported feeling homesick almost all

of the time (2%). About a third reported they get over it quickly (within a few weeks 32%), a third took a little longer ('took a while for me to feel better' 32%) and a third reported 'it took a long time to feel better' (32%).

What made boarders feel better (reported as somewhat or very helpful) when they were homesick included:

- Going on leave with their family (95%)
- Talking on the phone with family members

(95%)

- Exercising or playing sport (95%)
- Knowing when parents would visit (93%)
- Listening to music (92%)

Importantly, many students qualitatively reported feeling sad they were not allowed to listen to music stored on their devices (mobile phone or iPod were taken from them at bedtime). About one-third (35%) of Year 7 students reported listening to a talking book, stored on their mobile phone or iPod, at bedtime as 'somewhat or very helpful as a strategy to overcome homesickness'. While it is often believed collecting devices at night will assist in the minimisation of cyberbullying, no statistically significant difference was reported regarding the occurrence of bullying or cyberbullying after lights out when comparing boarders who DID and boarders who DID NOT have to hand in their mobile phones at bed time.

Further, overwhelming written response was received from students requesting access to Skype to stay in touch with their families.

Homesickness and girls

Significantly more girls (30%) than boys (13%) reported feeling homesick once a week or more often. In addition only (21%) of boys reported missing their family environment once a week or more often while (43%) of girls reported experiencing this. Approximately twice as many girls (21%) as boys (11%) reported feeling very homesick every time they returned to school. When girls asked for help regarding homesickness the problem was more likely to stay the same or get worse when compared with when boys asked for help. These findings suggest different strategies may be appropriate for boys and girls to assist them to cope with homesickness.

The Child Health Promotion Research Centre would like to thank the Boarding Houses, Residential Colleges and Investigators who gave their time so willingly to take part in this project. We hope you have found the results useful. We continue to seek further funding to investigate ways in which we can better understand the needs of boarding students. If you have any questions about this information or are interested in being part of future research projects relating to boarding students please contact Kate Hadwen at the Child Health Promotion Research Centre at Edith Cowan University on 08 9370 6848 or k.hadwen@ecu.edu.au.





State Chat Victoria

Duty of Care Workshop Melbourne Girl's Grammar

AUTHOR
Richard Stokes
Director of ABSA

The gathering and farewell followed a very successful day covering the Duty of Care course held at Melbourne Girls Grammar. Over 50 participants attended and all were delighted to welcome Richard Stokes and go through Book One which he did in much detail.

1. Richard Stokes Executive Director ABSA, Sue Collister President VICABSA, Doug Galbraith Retiring Head of Boarding at Scotch Melbourne, Nick Bates, Retiring Head of Boarding at Melbourne Grammar School, Polly Winterton Head of Boarding at Melbourne Girls Grammar and Sam Sapuppo, ex Head of Boarding at Xavier College now involved in Marketing.

The three gentleman are retiring or changing roles and all three have been long standing supporters of boarding. Sam and Doug were instrumental in the establishment of VICABSA.



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Bits About Boarding

AUTHOR
Michelle Dunn
Book Author



The face of boarding school has dramatically changed over the years. Boarding school has become a lifestyle, a platform to learn, and gives the opportunity to explore further horizons, scholastically and emotionally. Students are able to travel overseas and work in some of the poorest countries in the world. They are surrounded by many different adults and support people, who help them through thick and thin. They meet people from different cultures and walks of life, make new and diverse friends, and they set up an enormous support network, that can follow them for the rest of their life. It is always maintained that a friend made at boarding school is a friend made for life.

Many students coming into boarding school are not completely sure what to expect. They have heard the stories about how great boarding school will be, what great friends they will meet, and how they have many opportunities being offered to them.

Boarding facilities offer fantastic information, and very detailed descriptions of what the facility has to offer, the school curriculum and the amazing support that the students and families receive from the staff.

The transition from one school to the next is a large one to begin with, and beginning boarding school at the same time ensures it is a major life-changing event! We know education and information are the keys to a successful outcome. There are self-help books and guides to help us through almost every

possible scenario that we may experience in our lives, But, it is difficult to find the same practical, easy to understand information to make the transition into boarding school easier on students and families alike.

As parents, we give our children the best possible start to new phases in their lives. As staff members in the boarding house, we want the students to embrace the boarding lifestyle, and enjoy the new experiences, widen their horizons and languish in the opportunities of an extended family and great social circles.

With that in mind, I decided to write a book specifically aimed towards girls entering boarding school. The book is called 'Bits About Boarding School', and it is a guide to help students to be better prepared for entry into boarding by having a basic and practical understanding of the modern boarding expectations. It is aimed toward a demographic age of 11-15 years, but the information is also valid for students of an older age group.

The book, 'Bits About Boarding School' is available for on-line purchase from Vivid Pub-

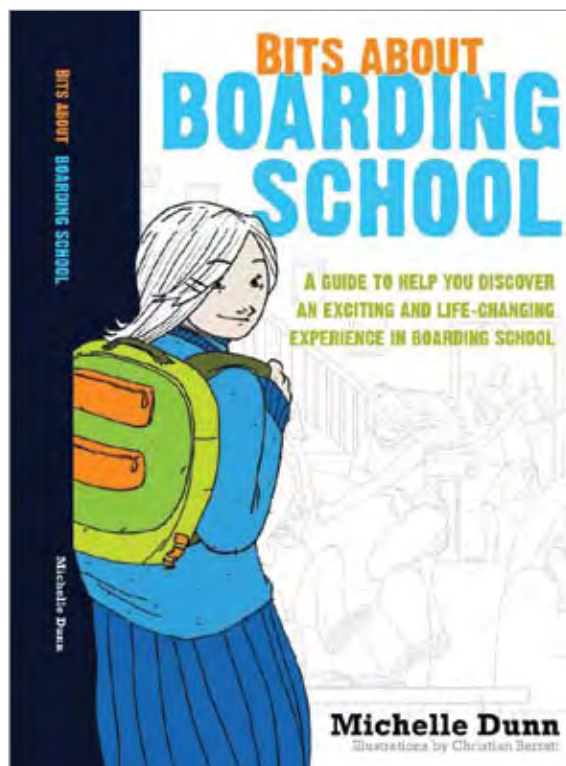
lishing (www.vividpublishing.com.au/bitsabout-boardingschool), for \$19.95, plus \$3.00 postage and handling. I also have a website named www.betterboardingexperiences.com.au, which provides information relating to boarding, along with links to other useful websites about boarding facilities and common issues. The website has an option for a "sneak peek" of the first chapter of the book, and the book can also be purchased from this site.

ABOUT ME

I have been working in the Boarding Industry for 6 years. I began my career at Northam Residential College WA, and I am now employed at St Hilda's Anglican School for Girls in Perth WA.

I have completed qualifications in Youth Work and Residential Care, and have completed a Diploma in Counselling. I actively participate in various workshops and personal development courses. I feel very strongly about helping teenage girls with their boarding experiences, and encouraging them to reach their full potential, both emotionally and scholastically.

Email: michelle.dunn@hotmail.com.au
Web: www.betterboardingexperiences.com.au



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- StartingBoarding
- How does Boarding affect my family
- Homesickness—
- How can it affect me
- Boarding House Food
- Living in a Communal Setting
- Expectations in the Boarding House
- Making New Friends
- Social Pressures
- Bullying
- Gossip
- Isolation/Exclusion
- Cyberbullying
- Conflict in the Boarding House



Rushing through life could be key to success and happiness

AUTHOR
Tim Sharp
Institute of Happiness

You drive,” said a friend of mine a few years ago, “just like you live.” It wasn’t, I think, a compliment. She was saying, I think, as she gripped the seat, the same thing as the car park attendant who used to call me Nigel Mansell.

It isn’t, I know, ideal to be still scraping out the leftover froth from your cappuccino when you hear the words ‘last call’ next to your name on the Tannoy at the airport. It isn’t ideal to be sitting on a bus when the radio show you’re meant to be on starts in two minutes. It isn’t ideal to be eating your fourth cake of the day because you’ve got, you know, a deadline, or to be writing at 2am because you’ve got an appointment you can’t miss in the morning, and your copy’s due at lunchtime.

It would be much better if you arrived at the airport early and at the radio studios early. But we are what we are. Which is why I like the sound of a new book called Rush. The book, which has the subtitle ‘Why you need and

love the rat race’, is by a man called Todd Buchholz, who used to be an economic adviser at the White House.

He set out to research a book about people ‘chasing success and losing their souls’. But, once he’d started, he changed his mind.

After doing quite a lot of research, he concluded that people chasing success didn’t ‘lose their souls’. In fact, they had a lovely time, and if we copied them, we would, too. The happiness experts, and yoga gurus are, he says, wrong. What we need to be happy isn’t to downsize, or downshift. It isn’t to lie in darkened rooms communing with our chakras. What we need to be happy is to work long hours and keep fighting our way up the corporate ladder...

What to do about it all?

So, you’re now wondering...should I get busier?

Well, at The Happiness Institute we’d suggest the answer is...yes and no!
That is, the engagement and participation in meaningful pursuits is definitely good for our happiness. Involvement in pleasurable and

satisfying activities is also good for our happiness and mood more generally.

But the blind pursuit of “doing stuff” just for the sake of “doing stuff” is probably not a great idea. Why? Because, if for no other reason, it distracts us from the real and meaningful, important stuff.

So in short we’d encourage you to keep busy with...

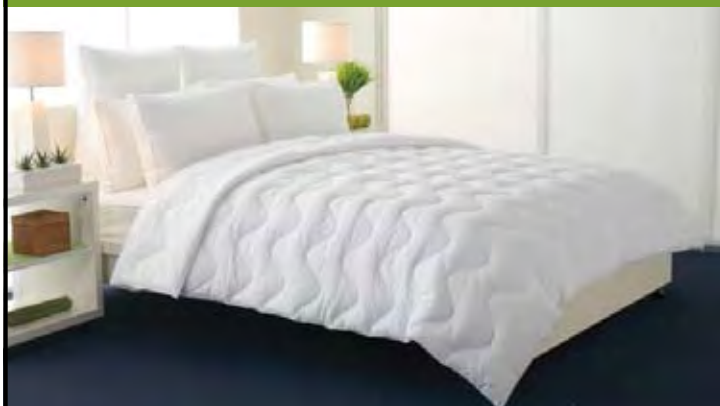
- tasks that are really important in your life
- things that will help you achieve your goals
- health related activities such as exercise
- interpersonal interactions and things that will boost the positivity of your relationships
- pretty much anything that provides you with an opportunity to utilise your strengths
- and things that are just plain fun

But don’t forget also to...allow yourself time to rest and recuperate; to contemplate and meditate. Because as we’ve said before, it’s hard to be happy if you’re literally sick and tired all the time and we all need some “time out” occasionally so we can then have “time in”!

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*Pymble Ladies College,
Sydney*



Self Tracking

AUTHOR
Peter Bajcic
Gumimba Housemaster
Kormilda College

Gumimba "Self Tracking" is a feedback to staff of the wellbeing of students. It was developed by Bjorn Christie-Johnston in a Co-ed Middle School Residence and has been modified by Peter Bajcic in a Boys Residence at Kormilda College in Darwin. Students can be interviewed by staff or complete a tracking slip that is collected by staff.

Students rate each the 10 questions out of a score of 10 points. 10 would be outstanding, 9 excellent, 8 very good, 7 good, 6 satisfactory, 5 fair, 4, poor and so on. The students decide their own points score and submit the slip to the House Parent.

My Life at Kormilda and House 1													
DATE													
NAME	YR	Date of interview	Life at Kormilda generally	Room mate	Meals	Other students	Ability to sleep	Sense of belonging	School	Homework	Feel safe	Feel supported	Comment

Houseparent names (HP):

1	Peter	S. Casual
2	Lee-ann	G. Henry
3	Natey	
4	Karl	May-20

Score: 1 = poor; 10 = excellent

WEEK.....

HP	RM	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	YR	Date of interview	Life at Kormilda generally	Room mate	Meals	Other students	Ability to sleep	Sense of belonging	School	Homework	Feel safe	Feel supported	Comment
1		Ullian	Cordell													
1		Chrisney	Boicombe													
2		Casey	Chyer													
2		Tanika	Stirling													
3																
3		Kelicha	Johnson													
4		Kayanne	Shower													
4																
5		Naomi	Roe													
5		Silvicka	Alwon													
6																
6																
7		Tila	Gumbula													
7		Reina	Frank													
8		Elizabeth	Roe													
8		Shirley	Austral													
9		Shania	Miller													
9		Ambler	Baker													
10																
10		Kira-Lee	Wilson													
11		Taylah	Murray													
11		Nathalia	Dixon													
12																
12																
13																
13																
14																
14																
15		Karlana	Bush													
15		Elmi	Ganzenbar													
16																
16																
17		Deondre	Hector													
17		Patrick	Grant													
18																
18																
19		Garry	Keppel Jr.													
19																
20		Hayden	Gismett													
20		Darcy	NicBean													
21		Anton	Rami													
21		Troyson	Ellis													
22		Allstair	Darcy													
22		Cody	Anderson													
23																
23																
24		Kendrick	Hector													
24																
25																
25																
26		Shane	Green													
26																
27		Michael	Limbay													
27		Hupert	Wurramana													
28		Duane	Daly													
28		Lawrence	Anzac													
29		Steven	Daniels													
29		Jordan	Baarda													
30		Trent	Kappel													
30		Andrew	O'Keefe													



ABSAs Visits Visits



Lunch together with NARSA personnel:
Richard Stokes, Elizabeth Christie-Johnson, Christine Latham (Executive Director, NARSA Standards Project) and Bjorn Christie-Johnson (CEO, NARSA)



Duty of Care Workshop,
Adelaide, February 2012



Duty of Care Workshop,
Adelaide, February 2012



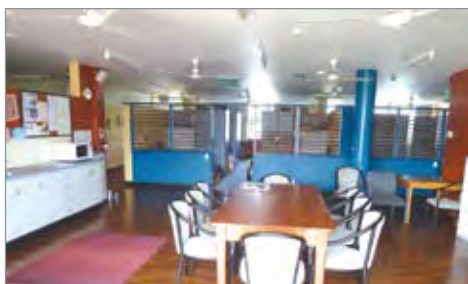
SA Heads of Boarding Dinner,
November 2011



Mr Peter Colgate, Mr Stuart Marquardt, Mr Richard Stokes at Great Southern Grammar, Albany, WA



View from the Boarding House at
St Augustine's College, Cairns



St Augustine's College, Cairns
Common Room



Dick Morriss, Head of Boarding at
St Augustine's College, Cairns



St Augustine's College, Cairns
Dining Room



Richard, Leanne and Malcolm McTavish,
Presbyterian Ladies College, WA



Peace Lutheran College
Common Room, Cairns



Peace Lutheran College
Boarding House, Cairns

The Location of Boarding Houses on Campus



AUTHOR
David Anderson
Shore School

The success of a boarding community can be contributed to many factors. Some reasons may be the total population of boarders compared to day students, the boarding experience of the senior leadership team, the composition of boarding students, the quality of boarding staff, the pastoral care program for boarders and the interest taken by the remainder of the school community recognising the importance of boarding within the structure of school.

The location of the boarding accommodation in respect to the nucleus of the school can be a strong influence on the overall success and recognition of the boarding community.

The dormitory accommodation in many schools in England was built many hundreds of years ago adjacent to the first classrooms on campus, however over time accommodation was spread across the generous acreage of the school grounds. In the case of Eton the boarding houses spread across a significant part of the township of Eton and on the edge of Windsor. In those days the point of entry for a new students into a boarding school was by way of the Housemaster. Enrolment was not organised by the School Registrar. Therefore boarding housemasters had a powerful influence in regard to admitting new student into the school. The environment and tone of the boarding house under such a system had possibly more influence on an individual student than the wider school community. Interestingly today in some boarding schools new students wishing to enter UK schools still make their enrolment arrangements with the Housemaster by attending interviews and completing an exam set by the Housemaster.

As the number of boarding schools grew and the boarding population of each school in-

creased the location of the boarding houses became separated from the main academic facilities. In many cases the distances between classroom and the boarding house was located some distance away from the classroom and administrative block to mark a strong delineation between school and boarding accommodation.

The separation of classroom and boarding house allowed students to experience a living environment away from the main campus for privacy purposes and to be seen as a home away from the day amenities of the school. Boarding housemasters strived to establish a special atmosphere and culture of their boarding houses allowing each house to have unique characteristics. These features were then promoted to prospective parents and students. The competition between staff and students in boarding houses was strong in both academic pursuits and the boarder's participation in house sporting competitions. Loyalty to a boarding house by parents and alumni lasted over generations of students which continues today.

Inspecting such gracious and extensive boarding facilities in England, United States and indeed in Australia is an impressive experience. The history of boarding schools in England can be traced to Winchester College founded by William Wykeham in 1382 which today claims to be the oldest boarding school in continual operation in Great Britain. In the United States, West Nottingham Academy in Maryland founded in 1744 is recognised as the oldest boarding school.

Reflecting on many aspects of the history of boarding and the life of boarders over hundreds of years one is struck by both the similarities and differences of boarders today, especially in Australia. Since The King's School Parramatta was founded in 1831 establishing itself today as Australia's oldest existing boarding school, the enrolment of boarders into many other boarding schools across Australia was strong serving families who required the education for their sons and daughters from isolated regions of rural and outback Australia. Australian boarding schools throughout the 19th and 20th centuries lived 'off the sheep's back' and only experienced a glitch in enrolment when the Australian dollar was floated in 1983, allowing the value of the dollar to fluctuate dependent



The Location of Boarding Houses on Campus



on supply and demand based on international money markets. This setback was closely followed by an even more significant problem for boarding schools when rural commodity prices dipped sharply in the early 1990s devaluing the price of wool and resulting in the price and profit of other agricultural commodities to experience reduced profitability.

Hard times for boarding schools followed in respect to enrolment into Australian boarding schools and a 15% fall in enrolments was experienced across the board. However in the following years good outcomes resulted from this awkward period in the history of Australian boarding schools. For the first time in many years the staff of Australian and overseas boarding schools examined the framework and structure of boarding programs in their attempt to attract new boarders.

The pressure on enrolment became the catalyst of change. Many long held beliefs and practices in boarding schools were debated and transformed. The new concept of promoting and marketing 'boarding' produced improved policies relating to the care of boarders and reduced the disciplinary authority of senior students over junior boarders. Boarding staff who enunciated new policies and procedures to prospective boarding parents were committed to providing the same programs and level of care when new boarders entered the school.

The attitudes of parents were also changing at this time as families from rural areas in Australia understood their children would need tertiary education beyond school in a competitive global community to meet new business challenges. This produced a higher academic expectation by parents and subsequently an improved academic culture to percolate into boarding houses.

Some of these changes in boarding houses in Australia in the 1990s resulted in channels of communication and 'leave' provisions becoming more generous and academic tutoring programs for boarders were included in the boarding program. Attitudes across society were also changing at this same time together with the structure and composition of the family unit. These attitudes and behaviours were all positive influences on the future life of a boarder and forced a breed of caring and trained supervisors responsible for the boarders. May I say

around Australia many of these new attitudes have come to boarding schools recently over different periods of time!

The changing attitudes and approaches to boarding in independent schools in the past two decades have caused the structure and location of boarding houses to be viewed differently. One could now question if boarding houses are best suited in isolation, some distance from the main school campus or near to the centre of the administrative and educational centre of the school.

Boarders today need to be closely monitored by the boarding staff of the school and also interacting with day teachers and as many auxiliary staff as possible. They can all be a support to boarders. I would suggest the more people involved with boarders on campus the greater influence on their well-being. Boarders do not need to be isolated, they need to be observed and recognised without their 'space' being intruded upon. If dormitories are close to the facilities of the school it can produce a greater level of care for each boarder widening the opportunity by resident staff to correction, praise and support each boy or girl.

Boarders do not need to be seen as a separate group from the wider school community. Today boarders participate and excel in every aspect of school life and should not be expected to demonstrate any particular stereo typical behaviour. The boarders should be part of the full school community living under the same rules, regulations and expectations of every other student. To allow this to happen boarders need to be able to take full advantages of the facilities of the school seven days a week. Therefore it can now be seen as advantageous

if boarders are accommodated reasonably close to the amenities of the school.

For boarders being centred around the centre of the school provides the boarders opportunities to benefit in every aspect of the life of the school. The location also allows more people to monitor the behaviour of the boarding, maintaining a higher level of adherence to the rules and regulations of the school.

Are boarders special? In the mind of every school the boarders should be afforded the same chance as every other student, however boarding staff push relentlessly for boarders to benefit from living on campus. It should be the aim of all residential staff that every boarder will have the opportunity to explore their individual talents by working with teachers and other boarders. In discovering the rich activities of the school surrounded by staff surely will enhance the education of the boarder.

A final advantage for boarding accommodation to be in reach of other school facilities comes into focus over weekends when many school now provide more generous weekend leave for boarders. For the boarders remaining on campus the nearness to other boarding houses and facilities of the school provided useful alternative activities and opportunities for friendship and sharing. There are now boarding house programs that that combine the accommodation of boarders from different houses over weekends to reduce loneliness in boarding houses located some distance from each other. The site of boarding houses on campus in the same way as so many other features of education in schools experiences the cycle of change turning the full circle.



In Order to Go Faster, First We Must Go Slower

In Order to Go Faster,
First We Must Go Slower

AUTHOR
Robyn Pearce
Certified Speaking Professional



Some years ago Mike Cotton was the new stock manager on a reasonably big sheep and cattle station near Gisborne.

'I'd been in the job about 6 months when my boss sat me down for a chat.'

'At the time I had two young shepherds to teach and guide, and I hated to waste time - I was always a tiger to get cracking. Normally we'd talk about which mobs needed moving, any other tasks for the day, and I'd be on my horse and away with the boys.'

'On this particular morning my wise old boss said: "I appreciate your work ethic, Mike. I've got no worries about you being the right appointment for my farm, but I have a bit of advice, if you'll accept it.'

"Every day we talk about the jobs to be done and almost before we've finished speaking you and the boys are disappearing over the horizon in a cloud of dust. Today I want you to go to the horse yards, saddle up, then climb up on the fence, sit on the rails and talk with the boys about the plans for the muster. Take 15-20 minutes if you like - then ride out."

'Needless to say, taking that time to plan significantly improved our stock handling.'

Mike's story is a perfect illustration of one of my favourite time management precepts - In order to faster, first you must go slower'.

How many times do we hear people say 'I haven't got time to .. '? Of course that is sometimes true, but if we notice ourselves repeatedly using this phrase, it may be time to step back a bit and analyse what's going on.

What are we really saying? We haven't got time to teach someone else? No time to fix that broken fence or repair the gate that's tied up with baling twine? We can't spare the time to go to a discussion group, or a Monitor Farm day, even though we know we might learn something useful? Or there's too much paperwork waiting in the office to study new farm administration techniques?

Wrong thinking. We can't afford NOT to take the time. If we always defer long-term actions (even something as simple as sitting on the stockyard rails for 15 minutes to plan the day's strategy) for the urgency of short-term tasks we will never (or only slowly and by luck rather than planning) grow, improve, and move our farming business to the next level.



In Order to Go Faster, First We Must Go Slower

Every change initially slows us down. In fact, I'd be very suspicious of the effectiveness of anyone who swings into a new task without an initial reduction of speed. How much thinking have they done? What effort has gone into looking for the most efficient way of performing the task? Welcome each new challenge, accept that it will slow you down for a little while, and look forward to the increase in productivity and new opportunities once you've mastered it.

This thinking applies in the farm office as well. What little processes can you improve by taking a little bit of extra time? How many computer shortcuts do you know? How competent are you with the programmes you use regularly, or would a course give you faster skills?

For instance, did you know about the time-saver of email signatures? Anything we type constantly can be turned into a block of text that can be dropped in anywhere in an email, not just at the end of the message. Two examples could be driving instructions to your farm, or

information about an upcoming event you're organising.

To create a new signature in Outlook:

- Tools, Options, Mail Format, Signature Picker, Select New, create a title meaningful to you, and follow the steps.
- Don't use 'v-card' - it becomes an attachment which few people open for fear of viruses.
- You must be in a New Mail to use a signature.
- There should be a Signature button on the Toolbar. Click on it and you'll see the list you've created.
- Some versions don't show the Signature button on the Toolbar, but it's available through a drop-down button.
- Investigate your own Help menu if the Signature button doesn't show on your screen.

If your email programme doesn't have this feature, investigate your software as to how to create macros or templates of frequently used data you can drop in.

Sometimes we have to unlearn bad or slow habits, but the effort is worth it. Think of it as an investment - of time. Remember - in order to go faster, first we must go slower. Once new habits are mastered, you'll save time.

Robyn Pearce CSP (Certified Speaking Professional) is the Time Queen. She mastered her own time challenges and now helps people around the world overcome theirs. She can show you how to transform your time challenges into high productivity and the life balance you desire.

She'll show you how to free up more time and get better results faster.

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 Pete Upham, ED TABS and Hilary Moriarty, National Director BSA | Topic: Boarding Internationally
 Dr Daryl Cross, author | Topic: Life Balance and Leadership

Launch of Australian National Boarding Standards

More information at:
www.boarding.org.au



Co Heads of Boarding

AUTHOR

Jenny Robinson
Director of Development
PLC Armidale



At PLC Armidale we are enjoying a new direction in our Boarding environment.

The chance to work together and to use their respective skills and experience in a true 'tree change' setting seemed an opportunity too good to pass up. As Co-Heads of Boarding at PLC Armidale they have become an integral part of the lives of the girls of the school since they began their new roles in September this year 2011.

Their arrival coincided with the completion of an extensive renovation and remodelling project in the boarding house, and the bright colours and soft furnishings reflect the colourful gardens that the house is located within. Keith was glad to be part of the team for the planning and management of the boarding house renovations. The end result is a much more modern and comfortable environment for the boarders.

When asked how she envisioned their future at PLC Armidale Cathy spoke of her plans for offering a wide range of opportunities for all girls. "We are already working to develop both wider opportunities and support for all girls to extend and refine all their academic, physical, spiritual and social skills. A happy boarding house with a sense of personal best achievement for every girl is our ultimate goal." The students themselves are enjoying the



atmosphere that the new Heads of Boarding have brought to the house. As Year 11 student Hana Moffatt explains, "the fact that boarders are welcome to call Cath and Keith by their first names is testament to the familial, encouraging environment that they have helped to create between girls of all ages, and the positive role models that they provide". The affectionate moniker for the duo, 'Cath and Keith' is one that is often heard in the boarding house, and in the playground, along with girls calling out for 'Molly', the family pet Cavoodle who has taken up residence along with Cath and Keith at school. Molly was introduced to the boarders from day one, and she is a great favourite with the girls.



1. Co Heads of Boarding Keith & Cathy Smith
2. PLC Boarders relax in the grounds with Co Head of Boarding Cathy Smith and Molly the boarding House pet.
Syrana Glenn (Armidale), Emily Mohun (Branxton), Cathy Smith (Co-Head of Boarding), Agnes Thwaites (Walgett), Emily Barber (Willow Tree), Eloise Lambell (Gulargam bone)
3. Co Head of Boarding Keith Smith enjoys a moment with Molly and Eloise Lambell (Garlargambone)



New Heads of Boarding

AUTHOR

Carloe Ward

Head of Boarding, Ipswich Girl's Grammar

Mark Oliphant

Boarding House Master, Newington College



Carloe Ward

Head of Boarding
Ipswich Grammar School

It is a privilege to start 2012 as Head of Boarding at Ipswich Girls' Grammar School after arriving in Australia only two years ago. I am a wife; the mother of two wonderful, successful young women; grandmother of a little girl who definitely shows potential and two more grandchildren on the way. Fifteen years of experience in secondary school boarding in Europe, and more recently in primary boarding in Toowoomba, have finally brought me here. I am excited and humbled by the task ahead of me.

I am revelling in the opportunity to provide a safe and nurturing environment for our boarder girls, a 'home from home' in a world where many homes are fractured and broken with ever increasing pressure. To see the girls become all that they can be; happy, confident, well educated women who can and will make a difference in their own communities with the life-skills they learn at school and in the boarding house.

I would like to see boarding expanded at Ipswich Girls' Grammar not only internationally but also to the wider Australian market. We have so much to offer with exceptional facilities and programs designed to bring out the very best in young women. Being a boarder at IGGGS is a wonderful opportunity to be a

part of a strong community, to share diverse cultures and reach the potential that every girl has with the best possible support – academically, emotionally and socially.

As a member of ABSA I look forward to sharing the journey with the dedicated, committed and innovative people of this organisation, who share my passion for all things boarding.

Mark Oliphant

Boarding House Master
Newington College

Mark has been appointed to Head of the Newington College Boarding House after Clive Parkin stepped out of boarding following just over six years as Boarding Coordinator. Mark's wife, Carla, has also taken a teaching position at Newington College. They moved to Sydney from Toowoomba in Queensland where Mark was a Boarding Housemaster and Health and Physical Education teacher at Toowoomba Grammar School. Carla was a teacher of Chemistry and Mathematics at Downlands College. Both Mark and Carla are excited about the prospect of working in a large inner-city school yet appreciate the homely feel of the Newington Boarding community.



Are you a new Head or Head of Boarding. Send in a short piece and a photo for inclusion in the next edition of Lights Out.

Coming Events

AUS

NSW

30 September - 3 October 2012

National Boarding Conference - Gold Coast, Qld

NZ

May 2012

Annual Conference, Hawkes Bay

USA

11-13 March 2012

Global Boarding Symposium

Gargetown University, Washington DC

29 November - 1 December 2012

Annual Conference

Washington DC

UK

1-3 May 2012

Annual Conference For Heads

Bristol Marriott Royal Hotel, Bristol

9 - 11 July 2012

Annual Conference For Matrons and Medical Staff

Barcelo Cheltenham Park Hotel, Cheltenham

3 - 5 January 2013

Annual Conference For Housemasters' and Housemistresses'

Holiday Inn, Stratford-Upon-Avon

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