

Inspired

ISSUE 3 | NOVEMBER 2023



ST ANDREW'S
CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

From our *Head of School*

Dr Julie McGonigle.



Naming this magazine, *Inspired*, was a risk. The etymology of the word, first points to the Latin term *inspirare* and then on to the Greek and Biblical term *pnein*, both of which mean to be filled with the breath of or moved by the Divine.

Yet, when you read what comes next, you will realise it is a risk worth taking. St Andrew's is no ordinary school; it is an inspired school.

In the truest sense of the word, it is a school that is filled with and moved by the spirit of God.

We call it '*the SACS spirit*'. It is the feeling in the School that you cannot articulate. It is the binding force that grows our community, that lifts our heads up, that fills us with joy, that moves our creativity and that makes the education that occurs immeasurable.

In this issue of *Inspired*, all of that is on display; whether it is providing growth opportunities for girls in rugby or for Junior School students in this year's major production of the Pinocchio musical; and the way in which our students are able to develop their learning skills through our Visible Literacy programme; and much more!

I encourage you to utilise the QR codes throughout the magazine to experience more of what the School has to offer.

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Paving the way for girls in rugby

In 2021, a trailblazing Year 7 student by the name of Georgia put her hand up to play in the St Andrew's Cathedral School Under 13s Rugby team. Given the high profile and success of the Australian women's rugby sevens team, this should not have come as a surprise. But to make this possible Director of Sport and Co-curricular Education, Mr Ric van Wachem, needed the approval of the Independent Sporting Association (ISA).

By Amy Malpass Hahn.

St Andrew's Cathedral School



“Georgia had been playing rugby her whole life and, of course, we wanted to offer her the opportunity to play for St Andrew’s Cathedral School,” he said.

“Based on the rules set out through NSW and Rugby Australia, which made no mention of it being a boys’ only sport, we made the case to the ISA and were able to go ahead.”

With Georgia playing for the team in 2021, she and St Andrew’s Cathedral School paved the way for future students and competitor schools alike. This past year, St Andrew’s Cathedral School was delighted to have four girls playing rugby for our competitive teams, which we trust will only continue to grow.

Three students in Year 7 – Olivia, Flora and Hania – are members of this year’s Under 13s, with Elyssa in Year 9 playing for the Under 15s. Elyssa particularly impressed the coaches, having never played before, but making the decision to try her hand in the game in the final year that it’s possible to play mixed rugby. Having been to the park with her father to practice and putting in time in the gym, she felt ready.

“I really wanted to try something new, so I just signed up for rugby when I saw it was an option,” Elyssa said. “My favourite part is the sportsmanship, which is just amazing. Being part of a rugby team, you get a deeper connection with everyone – even if you were not friends before – because you need to communicate and work together to score a try.”

Now at the end of the season, Olivia has clearly enjoyed playing the game. “I really love rugby – it’s such a kind, supportive and lovely team,” she said. She is also keen to encourage other girls to play, with the hope of an all-girls team in the future. “When I was in Year 5, I knew nothing about rugby, but I saw Georgia playing and I thought, ‘Hey, I’d like to do that!’” Olivia said. “It’s so easy to pick up the game and while it might seem scary at first, it’s really not. So, for any girls who are thinking about it, I’d say, go for it!”

Adding to the sentiment, Hania said, “I’m so happy I joined. It’s so much fun and after we win the games, it’s such a joyful and happy experience. I’d love to see more girls playing.”

Coach Richard Butler said he is really proud of the girls for setting such a fantastic standard in the School and across the broader Association.

“I hope this is just the beginning,” he said. “Moving forward, we’re looking to put forward a rugby sevens team in the school summer sport program, bringing together girls with similar passions from schools across the city.”

Congratulations to these remarkable athletes, and we look forward to seeing you all on the field!

Opposite page: Hania breaking through the pack.



See some great video highlights of our girls in rugby on the field.

My Son Pinocchio Jr: an extravaganza of musical magic

By Gavin Hanbridge.

When the curtain opened on our Junior School and Gawura production of Pinocchio at the 500 seat Concourse Theatre in Chatswood, audiences were treated to a beautifully created world of fairies, the enchanted puppet star and gorgeous Italian streetscapes.

Over 300 students took to the stage with an impressive range of songs to engage both the ears and the heart: from the lyrical Empty Heart and the famous When You Wish Upon a Star, to the upbeat melodies in Rise and Shine, and the frenetic pace of Toys. This show had it all!

With an amazing score by Academy Award winning composer Stephen Schwarz, the story rolled out across the stage with stunning backdrops and set pieces, crafted by illustrator Alison Smallwood and print specialist Janet Chakar. The resplendent costumes created by designer Suzanne Wilding Hart evoked the Victorian era setting of the original story.

The addition of the dance troupe to this year's musical showcased different talents that enriched the storytelling on stage. Under the experienced guidance of choreographer, Rebecca Cavenagh, students with dance and acrobatic experience added starlight sparkle, marionette quiriness, and carnival flair to the production.

Grandparent Annie Goodrich said it was an impressive Junior School production. "It was a fantastic production, I love that all the students and staff are involved," she said.

The colour and fun of the production also represented a journey of self development for our students. The Junior School and Gawura 2023 production was a wonderful culmination of hard work, teamwork, and laughter; just the right combination to challenge and inspire the students.

Director, Ben Milis said the musical was a great opportunity for many students who have not been part of a production before to take on smaller roles that develop their confidence.

“Helping students realise and maximise their potential is always exciting, especially when you think back to the first rehearsal and realise how far they have come,” he said.

All students in Years 3 to 6 were involved, meaning a large number of students had the chance to be in this major production. Rev Emma Newling, Junior School and Gawura Chaplain and the 2023 Producer, reflected that the musical made a great contribution towards student character development. “It’s a time when students have to be courageous and step out of their comfort zones, not everyone likes being on stage, or feels comfortable dancing!” she said.

Having such a large number of students on stage needs a big support crew and Emma says one of the best things about being the Producer was working with a huge range of people from across the school community.

“I love being involved in an activity where I see a different side of the students I teach. I also really enjoy working with teaching staff, parents, and support and operations staff, as part of a huge team. Everyone has a part to play in supporting the cast to have a great experience.”



Scan the QR code to see a beautiful photo gallery from the production.



Students creating the world of Pinocchio through acting, song and dance in September, 2023.



Year 10 passion projects: *self- development, skills and staying positive*

By Gavin Hanbridge.

There was certainly a buzz in the air at the Personal Projects Exhibition in Term 3, with a wide variety of projects, from mechanical devices, models, crafts and fashion design.

Every student in Year 10 at St Andrew's Cathedral School is tasked with completing a project of their choice that captures their interests, talent and learned skills. Most of all, it challenges them to think in new ways and overcome challenges.

It picks up on the School's Middle Years Programme (MYP), which provides students with a way to see the connections between their otherwise disconnected subjects. It's an essential skill for completing a self-guided project that transcends typical subject boundaries. The MYP empowers students to take on a project of significant scale.

A big part of it is staying positive throughout the project and seeing it through to the end.

Mrs Karen Hajj, Assistant Head of Mathematics Administration, says that through personal projects the School is aiming to develop the character of each student.

"It's a really natural way to show evidence of that," she says. "It's a display of what they've done."

"They are encouraged to choose something they love and have fun with it."

On one of the tables a black plastic turtle with eyes of silver slowly maneuvered its way across the surface. It's creator Arrabella Simpson has done other robotics projects, but this time says she wanted to make an animal that could walk.

"I firstly CAD (Computer Aided Design) modelled it and then 3D printed the parts," she says. "There are 250 lines of code powering the robot."

At another table in the exhibition, a continuous stream of people flicked through brightly coloured books. The difference from a usual book stall was that these books had all been made by hand, by Year 10 student Darcy Redican.

Darcy was fascinated by the process of book binding and set herself the challenge of learning how to do it. Along the way, she says she learned a lot about the history of how books have been put together.

"I went into a lot of depth on how books were made," she says, pointing out the materials traditionally used in making books.

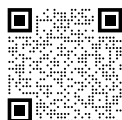
For Oliver Wells, his inspiration came from the cook-it-yourself restaurants he tried on a recent trip to Japan. The hibachi grill he manufactured sits gleaming in front of him.



Just some of the exciting projects on display at the Personal Projects Exhibition.

He praised the facilities at St Andrew's Cathedral School for assisting him to complete the project.

"There are two workshops and lots of materials and the teachers helped me a lot with designing this," he says.



Scan the QR code to see more of the student projects in the video from the exhibition in August, 2023.

A shared language of literacy yields dramatic results

By Layla Harris.

A new inter-disciplinary initiative has been introduced in the Secondary School that focuses on improving and expanding literacy skills for students. Known as 'Visible Literacy' it aims to ensure a shared language around writing structure across faculties, in order to deepen learning and improve student writing.

Driven by St Andrew's Cathedral School's Ms Estee Stephenson, Head of Gifted Education and English teacher Mrs Lizzie Skipsey, the programme initially began in 2022 for Middle School students and was so successful, it expanded to Year 10.

The Visible Literacy project was born from the realisation that students were taught a range of strategies to structure writing across different faculties, but this often confused students changing from class to class.

"It has dramatically improved the written output of our students and they are engaging with writing tasks in a more critical manner," says Ms Stephenson.

Mrs Skipsey says Visible Literacy seeks to unite the teaching and learning of key literacy skills, chiefly around writing, but particularly regarding using a shared language.

"It is important because by using the same terminology across multiple subject areas, students' cognitive load is reduced," she says.

Ms Stephenson says the value of Visible Literacy extends beyond students to their teachers.

“In HSIE, teachers are more confident in teaching the mechanics of writing, rather than just focusing on structure,” she says.

“It complements and enhances what English and HSIE teachers are already doing in the classroom by streamlining ideas, scaffolds and language”, says Mrs Skipsey. “This ties in neatly with the increased focus on grammar in the new NESA version of the Australian English curriculum, being implemented in 2024.”

Year 9 student Keet said Visible Literacy has helped her avoid plagiarism and create quality notes that were easy to read.

“I have used these strategies to study for assessments, get myself in the right headspace when studying and reduce procrastination when studying,” she said.

This sentiment was echoed by Stephanie, a Year 9 student, who said the programme clarified the structure of paragraphs which then allowed her to write essays and analytical paragraphs across all of her subjects and during assessments.

“I like that it breaks down essays into more manageable sections and helps build up my literacy skills,” she said.

Prior to introducing Visible Literacy to St Andrew’s Cathedral School, Ms Stephenson and Mrs Skipsey completed comprehensive training provided by the book, *The Writing Revolution*, taken from the philosophy of Dr. Judith C. Hochman. Hochman’s world-renowned philosophy offers a method to teach writing to students in the early years through a variety of activities and steps with the aim of establishing strong foundations.

Ms Stephenson and Mrs Skipsey’s utilised elements of Hochman’s teaching to create a Visible Literacy plan catering to St Andrew’s Cathedral School students and staff alike.



Ms Estee Stephenson in class with students



Practical experience *gives valuable insights for parents*

By Layla Harris.

Claire Linnett



After working as a teacher in St Andrew's Cathedral School's Junior School for eight years, Claire Linnett has recently embarked on a new journey at St Andrew's Cathedral School as our Junior School Enrolments Specialist. We caught up with Claire to hear about her new role and the enrolments process at our school.

Tell me about your new role. What does it involve?

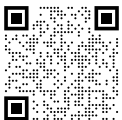
I oversee the entire enrolment process from Kindergarten to Year 6. I'm involved in every step of the way, including accompanying students to their classrooms on their first day. It's a truly rewarding experience to connect with the families and learn about their unique stories. My favourite aspect of this role is extending enrolment offers to students and witnessing their excitement as they anticipate joining the School.

What encouraged you to join the Enrolments team?

Having been a part of the St Andrew's Cathedral School community for more than eight years, I have cherished my time teaching in the Junior School. However, I reached a point where I was seeking a fresh challenge. Yet I didn't want to part ways with the School that I love. I recognised the substantial advantages of taking on this specialised role as someone who has worked in the classroom.

What advice would you have for parents who are beginning their enrolment journey at the school?

If you're considering whether the School is the right fit for your family, we encourage you to come and experience St Andrew's Cathedral School in action. Connect with people you know who have children attending the School and attend some of our events to get a firsthand feel for our community.



Scan to read more about our enrolment process here.



Read more on Claire's journey at the School in the online version of Inspired.

Interview

Year 7

parents:

Betty and Anthony Preshaw

By Lyn Jarvis.

Anthony, Simona and Betty Preshaw



How did you first hear about St Andrew's Cathedral School and what motivated you to enrol your daughter?

Our daughter attended Claremont College which we loved and friends had told us that the culture at the School was very similar, so that is how we first became interested. We wanted coeducation and the opportunity to study the International Baccalaureate (IB). We were also really impressed by Dr McGonigle.

What were your first impressions of the School?

It was a friendly place and we thought the facilities were great when we went on the tour. Everything was really well-organised and there was lots of communication. There seemed to be an understanding of parents' perspectives.

What challenges did you face as newcomers to the School? Who helped you overcome them?

The biggest challenge for us was not knowing people. The WhatsApp group for the year group organised by the Association of Parents and Friends (P&F) has been really useful, with parents jumping in and helping you learn what is happening. We went to the picnic for students and parents before the year started, and that was a good chance to meet people, as is the sidelines of winter sport. We've been to a few events such as Showcase and the Year 7 parent social evenings. The other parents have been very friendly.

Has your daughter settled in – and has she made friends?

Yes, she has settled in really well to Year 7. The Tutor Group is organised with some students from our local area and she has made lots of friends. She's doing well with her schoolwork and the Middle Years Programme (MYP). It's been a very smooth transition to St Andrew's Cathedral School which we are delighted about.

What advice would you give to a new family starting at St Andrew's Cathedral School?

Get involved so you can meet people. Get onto the WhatsApp group as soon as possible and go to as many events as you can. Welcome in the Square on the first day is good, as was the welcome night where we could meet teachers and other parents.



CHELSEA PITMAN

Back when Commonwealth Games gold medallist Chelsea (OA2007) arrived at St Andrew's Cathedral School in Year 10 in 2004, she displayed considerable sporting prowess in netball and basketball.

Chelsea was one of the few students to earn a 'Gold Pocket', an honour reserved for students who have received international recognition in their chosen discipline, after selection in the U17 Australian netball squad.

Chelsea spent four years here, which was unusual at the time as we only had girls in the Senior College. She completed the HSC Pathways programme, designed for students participating in 'highly demanding activities' including professional sports.

Chelsea made her international debut for the Australian Netball Diamonds in the 2011 World Netball Championships. The Diamonds won the final 58-57 to claim the Gold with Chelsea playing a major role in the Australian victory.

She represented Australia throughout 2012 but five years later switched allegiances and was selected to play for England, qualifying through her Yorkshire-born father. She made her second international debut for England in 2017 and was part of the England team which won the gold medal at the 2018 Commonwealth Games, defeating her old team Australia in the final.

In September this year, the Old Andean from Class of 2007, announced her retirement after the 2023 Netball World Cup.

By Richard Hansen.



See Chelsea's announcement of her retirement on her Twitter page.



MATTHEW GARRICK

Journalist and author, Matthew Garrick (OA2003), arrived at St Andrew's Cathedral School in 2001 and showed plenty of promise in English and Visual Arts.

He went on to study journalism at the University of Canberra in 2004, graduating with a Bachelor of Digital Communication and Media in 2007.

Matt cut his teeth in the industry by moving across the Nullarbor to Western Australia, first working in a local newsroom in Albany and then for 6WR Waringarri Radio in Kununurra.

After a brief stint overseas, he has been based in the Northern Territory since 2012, and in northern Australia since 2009, his passion and focus are on issues affecting the Top End and Darwin, Central Australia and Northeast Arnhem Land.

Formerly Features Editor at the NT News, he has lived in East Arnhem Land where he worked for the ABC, as a freelancer and as the editor of the local paper, the Arafura Times. He is now an award-winning writer and ABC News journalist based in Darwin.

In addition to his news reporting, Matt's first book, *Writing in the Sand*, is an authorised biography of the ARIA Hall of Fame inductees *Yothu Yindi*. Matt has been following Yothu Yindi's story since his dad took him as a kid to see them play in Sydney's Centennial Park. He has written about the band extensively, formed close relationships with members and their families, and has worked as the band's media coordinator and authorised biographer.

By Richard Hansen.



To see some of Matt's work as an ABC journalist, scan here




To purchase his book, scan here

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Old Andreans Association

The OAA connects former students with the School and each other by organising reunions and social gatherings.



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Principled

Be anchored in something
bigger than yourself.

FRONT COVER | OLIVIA SHOWING HER SKILLS ON THE RUGBY FIELD.
BACK COVER | YEAR 12, HSC VA STUDENT OLIVER HILL,
TEXTILE AND FIBRE, CONSEQUENCES.



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