

SPECTEMUR AGENDO

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NEWCASTLE
GRAMMAR
SCHOOL





**NEWCASTLE
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SCHOOL**

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Front cover

Ari Alexander (Year 5), Hannah Barker
(Year 6) and Toby Sayer (Year 5).

Inside front cover

William Guyder (Year 1) and
Samuel Nightingale (Year 9).

CONTENTS

2	HEAD OF SCHOOL
3	HEAD OF PRIMARY
4	THE JOY OF READING AND WRITING
5	THE BEST START FOR KINDERGARTEN
6	PRIMARY ENRICHMENT
7	STEAM-POWERED FUTURES
8	HANDS-ON SECONDARY LEARNING
10	CELEBRATING NEURODIVERSITY
11	ROUND SQUARE INITIATIVE
12	ENGINEERING IN ACTION
13	FAMILY NIGHT
14	CELEBRATING MOTHER'S DAY
16	WELLBEING IN ACTION
18	HOUSE SPIRIT
19	MUSIC FESTIVAL
20	HANDS ON HUMANITY
21	JAPAN 2024
22	ONE ENCHANTED EVENING: YEAR 11 BALL
24	MUSIC AND SERVICE
25	CO-CURRICULAR: THE ARTS
26	SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS
30	SKATING TO SUCCESS
32	ROWING ADVENTURES IN QUEENSTOWN
34	CLASS OF 2019: BLAINE STUBBS
35	CLASS OF 2003: CHRIS THORNTON
36	A HISTORY OF GIVING



BECAUSE OF THE GIANTS HEAD OF SCHOOL



There is a common saying, often used when something momentous is achieved; "I have been able to reach this high, as I stand on the shoulders of giants."

It's an honourable sentiment. Nothing in life is achieved in isolation. While it is the athlete who must run the kilometres and do the work as she strives to complete the marathon, it is the support of her coach, her family and even the volunteers on race day, who contribute to her success.

The scientist may make a world changing discovery – but behind that eureka moment are thousands of attempts, countless hours of work and dedication. There is a quote attributed to Thomas Edison after his successful patenting of the incandescent electric light bulb. Reportedly, it took him more than 10,000 attempts to get it right. Fittingly he wrote, "I have not failed. I have just found 10,000 ways that won't work."

One can only imagine the number of people Edison consulted, talked to and pestered across those years of toil. But we must always strike the balance of honouring and recognising all that has come before us and striking out on our own path – in the words of great mythical Star Trek commander, Captain James T Kirk, "To boldly go where no [one] has gone before!"

At Newcastle Grammar School, we take immense pride in our history. We have experienced significant changes in the journey of our School. Originally known as Newcastle Church of England Girls' Grammar School, we are now known as NGS. The decision to become a co-educational school was made to better serve the Newcastle region and secure a bright future for the School. Imagine the various considerations and apprehensions faced by those involved; knowing that a decision such as this would disrupt so much and veer away from a path that had long been followed; finding that balance – maintaining the traditions and values, but striking out in a direction that was right for now and the future.

I was considering this very sense of balance as I stood at Park Campus watching our new building rise from the ground. Formerly the site of the Newcastle Teacher's College and then a Technical (TAFE) Campus, we are now creating a learning environment that

will enable all NGS Primary students to be together on the one site – this will be transformative. Previously, a Middle School model of Years 5 to 8 existed at NGS, which was the right model for the time and we honour those who worked and developed that way of doing things.

We are now in a new chapter of our school journey, with a new setting. Our Year 5 and 6 students are looking forward to the move from Hill to Park. We can't wait to see what's possible! This is not to diminish all that has come before. Quite the contrary – we are again moving to a way that works for our community at this time in our history.

We gratefully acknowledge that we are only here because we stand on the shoulders of giants – the many who have come before.

Mr Matt Macoustra
Head of School



Poppy Giles Year 4 and Buddy Bennett Year 3.

FRESH IMPACT

HEAD OF PRIMARY



Our Primary students, staff and families are excited to be witnessing the daily and weekly building updates as it continues to grow and change. We are all eagerly waiting for the extensive development project to be completed, and many of our students enjoy witnessing firsthand the hard work and the interesting findings that are occurring every day by peeking through the portholes.

Collaboration has been the key focus for the building design. Learning spaces have been deliberately planned to allow for greater interactions between students in the same year level and across stages. The building utilises natural light, and spaces are linked in a way that allows people to move through the area without disturbing the learning.

This building project has created great energy throughout the entire school and local community. We're thankful for Core Project Group's support, particularly from Mr Courtney Knight, Commercial Director, as his daily updates and communication with staff continues to be outstanding.

How will these improved learning spaces benefit students?

Student outcomes will be improved on many levels, including academic performance, student wellbeing and students' social and emotional development.

Academic

The provision of adequate breakout areas, purpose-built specialist spaces

and better connectivity throughout the building will assist staff in delivering improved pedagogy, which will impact student achievement positively.

Wellbeing

Wellbeing is influenced by many factors and the new facilities, modern bathrooms on all levels, a lift, more robust connectivity throughout the building and the fresh, modern look will help fortify the overall mood and morale among students and teachers.

Social and Emotional

Alongside greater connectivity, a more welcoming administration environment and new and improved spaces will support and foster more significant levels of interaction and productivity. These new facilities will also create a sense of pride, not only for the new spaces, but also for the way people interact.

This is an exciting time for our Primary learners and families.

Mrs Alisha Dyer

Head of Primary



The new Park Campus building from Union Street – May 2024.

THE JOY AND DISCOVERY OF READING AND WRITING

Reading and writing, the language of the classroom, are not just skills to be acquired – they are transformative and empowering experiences. Becoming an independent reader and writer brings our Kindergarten students a deep sense of accomplishment and confidence. It opens the doors to a world of books and information, encouraging them to explore on their own.

Our Kindergarten Morning Reading Program is built on the extensive evidence about how we learn to read. Beginning with phonological awareness tasks that focus on recognising and manipulating the sounds of spoken language, every Kindergarten student experiences a daily one-to-one opportunity to review the foundation concepts introduced in the classroom. We truly appreciate the invaluable contribution of time shared by our

parent volunteers, which makes this daily practice possible.

Helping students make connections between what they are learning and what they already know is a highly effective approach to ensure the retention of new skills. Our Morning Reading Program is personalised for each student, incorporating knowledge of letter-sound correspondence and blending activities into daily routines to build fluency. As students return to the classroom, they have strengthened their memory of previously learned material, making it easier to recall in reading and writing activities throughout the day.

Learning to read is a gradual process filled with the joy of discovery and the satisfaction of mastering an important skill. It is further enhanced by the support and guidance found within the shared moments of reading, where encouragement and constructive feedback intertwine to enrich the journey.

Ms Belinda Nichols

Deputy Head of Primary and
Head of Learning and Teaching K-6



YEAR 5 SUSTAINABILITY

Upcycle Newcastle visited Year 5 classes to demonstrate what can be done with items of clothing that are at their end of life.

Students were excited to begin the task of turning old shirts into beautiful rugs that could be used in a variety of ways. It was clear from the level of discussion, laughter and enthusiasm, that they enjoyed the prospect of creating something new from something old.

We thank Upcycle Newcastle for their time with our students, empowering them to be more mindful of their impact on the world and how we can live more sustainably within it.



1. Ms Mariko Backx and her daughter Isabel Caddies volunteering at the Kindergarten Morning Reading Program.
2. Harper Windever and Florabella Spiteri (Year 5).
3. Rory Byrnes and Ari Alexander (Year 5).

PREPARING FOR KINDERGARTEN

GIVING YOUR CHILD

THE BEST START

Current preschool students will soon commence the transition to Newcastle Grammar School Kindergarten for 2025. To ensure this journey is as smooth as possible a new role, NGS Preschool Liaison Officer, was created.

NGS has made a commitment to build secure, reciprocal relationships with children, parents and Early Learning Services before they even begin at NGS to assist families in the transition to school life. Community connections are made with Early Learning Services through field visits, where relevant information about each child is shared and collaborative partnerships are developed.

Relationships are formed with and between the children through activities and performances held each term in their preschool year, which provide opportunities to come together for hands-on presentations, learning facts, making friends and building familiarity with the school environment. Regular correspondence to parents and carers is provided, which includes detailed information and resources about school readiness and how to best prepare their child for Kindergarten.

Building relationships with current school students is introduced by participating in a bespoke reading program. Year 5 NGS students visit the preschoolers at nearby Explore & Develop Newcastle East, reading stories, instilling a love of literacy and building connections at the same time.

Each child who commences Kindergarten in 2025 at NGS will be well known, have familiarity with the school environment, know their peers and have a positive attitude well before their first day. Individual profiles are created for the teachers, so that each child's abilities and needs are



accommodated for. Personalised learning can commence from day one and the transition into school life is smooth. Knowing what to expect in the school environment helps children experience a positive start and this begins well before their first day of school.

We want all our incoming students to be known as individuals, to flourish and thrive in Kindergarten.

Ms April Cooke
Preschool Liaison Officer

1. *Charlotte Lloyd.*
2. *Cameron Ho.*
3. *Hudson Dann.*





PRIMARY ENRICHMENT

What a joy it is to be part of the Enrichment Program at Park Campus. Through our commitment to personalised education, this program provides children with additional challenges and diverse learning experiences.

In the English Enrichment classes, children thrive on the opportunity to delve deeply into literature. From Year 1 to Year 4, students use problem-solving skills to identify the problems characters face based on their decisions and assumptions about motives and behaviours. Years 1 and 2 have been investigating Rumpelstiltskin.

"I didn't realise there were so many problems in fairytales! I like trying to solve them." – Riya, Year 2.

"This is one of my favourite activities. It's so fun pulling apart the story to find the problems." – Charles, Year 2.

Year 4 students also enjoy problem-solving as they analyse some of the complex themes, characters and narratives presented in *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet*.

"I love hearing the Shakespearean words. They help us understand the time period better." – Zayman, Year 4.

"I was surprised at how tragic the plays are, especially *Hamlet*. It is so unbelievable it's almost funny." – Nicolas, Year 4.

During Mathematics Enrichment, children engage in real-world problem-solving and challenges. Year 2 students explore waste management issues and apply mathematical concepts to find solutions.

"I enjoy collecting data and seeing how much plastic and waste we do have at school. I want to see if there are ways to reduce this." – Sebastian, Year 2.

Year 1 students will undertake a project to design a new playground for Park Campus, incorporating mathematical concepts such as measurement and geometry.

"I can learn about measuring how big something is so it fits in the playground." – Alyssa, Year 1.

"I like imagining that we could have a pool with a waterslide. It is fun to create." – Matthew, Year 1.

While installing a water slide may not be feasible, seeing the students stretch their imaginations and engage in creative thinking is wonderful.

Mrs Tracy Pickford

Enrichment Teacher K-6

1. Fletcher Niven and Riya Goyal (Year 2).
2. Leonardo Rulli (Year 2).
3. Anton Rykers and Sebastian Johnson (Year 2).

STEAM EXPLORATION

PREPARING FOR A

TECHNOLOGY-RICH

FUTURE

From Kindergarten to Year 6, our STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) Program immerses students in captivating projects designed to ignite creativity and foster problem-solving prowess.

During Years 5 and 6, our students utilise technology to breathe life into animations and construct intricate cardboard arcades. They explore the wonders of electricity using clip circuits and Makey Makey technology, experiment with machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI), design their own amusement parks and eagerly tackle engineering challenges in preparation for the University of Newcastle Discovery Day. (Makey Makey is an invention kit with a small circuit board which, when connected to a computer, allows users to turn everyday conductive objects into touchpads and keyboards).

This year, the 2024 Paris Olympic and Paralympic Games brings the opportunity to explore the role of STEAM in sports and for students to engineer their own solutions to real-world problems.

Yet, it is not solely about the projects – it's about the voyage itself. The program guides students through the engineering design process, cultivating vital skills such as communication, collaboration and critical thinking.



The overarching goal is to empower students to envision themselves as the innovators, leaders and problem-solvers of tomorrow. By infusing real-world scenarios into challenges, the Stage 3 STEAM Program ignites curiosity and a passion for STEAM careers. Through creative processes, inquiry methods and an adaptable curriculum, STEAM nurtures a love of learning and equips students with the tools they need to thrive in the dynamic landscape of the 21st century.

Mrs Sarah Morgan

Specialist Teacher – STEAM

1. *Amelia Hair, Sofia Hutchings, Willow Frazer and Rebecca Zhu (Year 6).*
2. *Alexander Sestan, Toby Sayer (Background – Harper Windever, Atheia Ison, Francesca Smith, Ava Mistry, Micah Dodd and James Perry) Year 5.*
3. *Annabel James, Amy Thomas and Liyana Seng (Year 6).*





CHALLENGING OUR STUDENTS

DEEP THINKING AND HANDS-ON LEARNING

At Newcastle Grammar School, we are committed to providing our students with a well-rounded education that prepares them for the challenges of the 21st century.

In partnership with the Association of Independent Schools of NSW (AISNSW), teachers have been designing and implementing deep learning experiences to enhance the educational experiences of students, providing them with rich opportunities to engage with learning partners, use Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and develop the six global competencies: character, citizenship, collaboration, communication, creativity and critical thinking.

NGS students have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities and programs that help them develop

these competencies. Our Year 8 Geography students recently went on an excursion to Blackbutt, where they worked in partnership with the team at Hunter Water and Hunter Local Land Services to complete water testing and water bug surveys. This hands-on learning experience helped our students develop their collaboration and communication skills, while also deepening their understanding of conservation and citizenship.

Similarly, our Year 10 Geography students went on an excursion to Redhead Beach, where they focused on environmental concerns and the management of coastal landscapes. This excursion also helped our students develop their collaboration and communication skills, while deepening their understanding of conservation and citizenship.

In our History program, we offer a range of activities that help our students develop their character and critical thinking skills. Recently, the Year 9 and 11 Modern History students had access to the WWI Living History interactive museum, where they heard engaging presentations and handled antiques. This experience helped students reflect on the experiences of war and the character of those who fought in it.

Our Year 7 History students also had the opportunity to apply their critical thinking skills to solve a 'History Mystery' from the ancient past. This new assessment task required students to use their creativity and critical thinking skills to present their findings on complex and ambiguous historical mysteries, such as how the pyramids were built and where Cleopatra's tomb is located.



2

The new Year 9 Entrepreneurship class is currently working on their submissions for the NRMA Future of Transport Competition. As part of this project, our students use Design Thinking to propose and create a prototype and deliver a product pitch that addresses a real-world problem.

Year 7 students engaged in a cross-curricular experience in both STEM and PDHPE focused on sun safety. Working with the Cancer Council to understand the importance of staying sun safe, students also worked on designing and creating a hat with a high UV rating.

NGS again participated in the University of Newcastle Science and Engineering Challenge, a national program that provides students with the opportunity to experience STEM in a real-world context. As part of our commitment to experiential learning, a group of Year 10 girls visited the RAAF base at Williamstown to participate in a Women in Aviation Workshop. Meanwhile, the Year 9 Food Technology classes showcased their skills in action by catering many events throughout the semester.

Students studying Japanese immersed themselves in an incredible cultural experience when they travelled to Japan during the mid-semester holidays. They were able to apply their language skills in context and learn about Japanese culture through their trip, building their competency

in communication, intercultural understanding and character. Our Year 8 French students have also been developing their cultural understanding through an exploration of values in music. A comparative study enabled them to see the similarities between French and Australian cultures and develop a greater sense of compassion and empathy.

The explicit teaching of global competencies alongside disciplinary knowledge and skills is crucial in the modern world where graduates will need to be more agile, creative and critical. At the heart of Deep Learning is the development of learning processes that can be transferred to new and unfamiliar situations. It requires students to be challenged to think deeply, explore different perspectives and engage in experiences that require them to address complex issues. By engaging with learning partners, students at NGS can see how their learning is relevant and appreciate how this disciplinary knowledge can be applied.

Teachers in the Secondary School continue their work with Deep Learning, designing unique programs and experiences that engage students in challenging learning environments that require them to think deeply about important guiding questions.

Mrs Lisa Peterson

Director of Learning and Teaching



3



4

The explicit teaching of global competencies alongside disciplinary knowledge and skills is crucial in the modern world ...

1. Year 7 Experience Day focused on sun safety.
2. Lincoln Dewar, Year 7, investigating the canon at Fort Scratchley.
3. Harrison Najor, Year 9, wearing clothing from WWI.
4. Year 7 at Newcastle Beach.

CELEBRATING NEURODIVERSITY FOCUS ON INCLUSION

This year, NGS participated in its first Neurodiversity Celebration Week, led by Learning and Support Teachers, Mrs Heidi Lindgren and Mrs Megan Thomas, with a team of student helpers. This worldwide initiative, which started in 2018, aims to change perceptions of neurodivergence from focusing on the challenges, to a more balanced view centred on strengths and talents.

In conjunction with Tyrrell Term's theme of Wisdom, a dedicated Secondary School Assembly celebrating neurodiversity was held, leaving the audience in awe. Posters were displayed throughout the School highlighting numerous successful individuals who have achieved greatness not in spite of, but because of, their neurodiversity. The whole school was abuzz with chatter about the posters and many students participated in a lunch activity of fidget-making in the library.

Neurodiversity Celebration Week planted a seed in the minds of us all – can we challenge misconceptions about neurological differences and transform how neurodivergent individuals are perceived in our own school?

The Learning Enhancement Faculty plays a crucial role in ensuring every individual can thrive in their

educational journey. Our team is made up of Learning Support Officers (LSOs), Learning Support Teachers (LSTs), a Gifted and Talented (G&T) Teacher and an English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) Teacher. The team thrives on collaboration – working together with classroom teachers to enhance the learning experience. Through joint planning and co-teaching initiatives, they enrich classroom dynamics, infusing diverse perspectives and innovative strategies. Fostering a culture of teamwork and shared expertise, they create an environment where every student can thrive.

The team regularly attends classes to provide support to all students. The Faculty offers before and after school small group lessons, where metacognitive and executive functioning skills are targeted for practice. Additionally, working with students individually to tackle large tasks, Learning Support Teachers have the additional role of coordinating an individual plan for students with identified needs. They do this by communicating with students, parents/carers, teachers and allied health professionals to identify strengths, challenges and possible adjustments to facilitate student participation and engagement.

With our overarching goal of inclusion for all, we prioritise eliminating discrimination and promoting acceptance, ensuring that all students can access and participate equally with their peers. A shift to inclusion benefits all students, leading to a rights-based approach, supporting the active participation of all learners in mainstream schools¹. Inclusion reflects the changing views of both individuals and society at large. To make this equitable, and possible, barriers are removed so that "schools can develop capacities to support the individual strengths and needs of every student, not just those students with disabilities"². The goal is to have "the differences of bodies and minds being understood, embraced, accommodated for and celebrated as being completely normal and part of the human condition"³.

At Newcastle Grammar School, we foster the inclusion of all students and staff and encourage everyone to reach their full potential, whilst celebrating each person's uniqueness. Our strong traditions and history have moulded us into a caring community with a tradition of compassion. It is our role to make diversity the norm.

Ms Heidi Lindgren
Learning Support Teacher

¹ Commonwealth of Australia (2023). Royal Commission into violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disability. Executive summary, our vision for an inclusive Australia and recommendations.

² Mitchell, D., & Sutherland, D. (2020). What really works in special and inclusive education: using evidence-based teaching strategies (3rd edition). Routledge.

³ Meijer, C. J. W., & Watkins, A. (2019). Financing special needs and inclusive education – from Salamanca to the present. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 23(7–8), 705–721. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.newcastle.edu.au/10.1080/13603116.2019.1623330>

*Secondary Learning Support Team
– Annabelle Devonshire, Alice An,
Rebecca Collins, Juliette Ra,
Jessica Parsonage, Heidi Lindren,
Megan Thomas, Attiya Hussain,
Astrid Lepelaar and Kylie Maunder.*



GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

ROUND SQUARE

Newcastle Grammar School joined the Round Square network of schools just before the world locked down in 2020.

While this may have been terrible timing to join a global organisation as our students were unable to travel, in many ways, it offered us more unique and creative opportunities to connect. Video calls and online environments became available, which meant that our students could still engage with other like-minded students from across the globe to discuss topics that inspired them, help each other build networks and collaborate around ideas to create a better world. Thankfully, we can now blend both online and in-person experiences to provide more opportunities for our students to develop global mindsets.

There are over 250 Round Square schools around the world that share a commitment to character education and experiential learning built around six themes – the IDEALS of International Understanding, Democracy, Environmental Stewardship, Adventure, Leadership and Service. NGS is committed to fostering a global perspective and our alignment with

Round Square bolsters our initiatives, such as providing the opportunity for our students to attend in-person conferences in Rockhampton, QLD, for 13 to 15-year-olds (June 2024) and Colombia for our senior students (September 2024). However, these forums and exchanges do not make up the entirety of the Round Square experience in our School: our service, fundraising, adventure, leadership and commitment to showcasing the student voice, impacts the entire community. This was shown in Semester 1 through the Kindergarten to Year 12 fundraising Dress up Day for Vietnam, the Zoom online international 'Postcard' Conferences held by both our Senior and Junior committees in Years 7 to 12, the creation of a Kindergarten to Year 12 International Women's Day video that presented our views on this year's theme, *Counting her in*, and our student voice blog with a story or anecdote about a passion idea which is published by our students each week.

Every day we aim to embrace the Round Square philosophy and the IDEALS in our development of well-rounded, socially responsible individuals equipped to thrive in an interconnected world.

We ensure that a regional school such as NGS delivers an education that transcends geographical boundaries and helps prepare our students for their global futures.

Mrs Samantha Jones

Assistant Head of Global Studies



Dress Up Day costumes inspired by the movies.

1. 5Y from 101 Dalmatians.
2. KB from Favourite Farm.
3. TMB from The Bee Movie.
4. 3L from The Lion King.

ENGINEERING IN ACTION

After completing their Civil Engineering unit, the Year 12 Engineering Studies class had the opportunity to observe real-life applications at the Park Campus Building Site.

Students met with Mr Courtney Knight, Commercial Director from Core Project Group, and Ms Jennifer Passfield, Project Manager from The APP Group. Jennifer shared the process undertaken to stabilise the mine shafts situated 60m below the site, known as mine grouting. Courtney gave an overview of the project and shared details about the methods employed to ensure that the new building will withstand an earthquake.

After a thorough safety briefing and the distribution of essential Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), the students enjoyed a tour of the site, which included watching the formwork being removed from the impressive staircases. The students are excited to see the final product after learning so much about the engineering involved at this stage of the build.

Mr Lee O'Brien
Head of STEM



Year 12 Engineering Studies students at the Park Campus building site.



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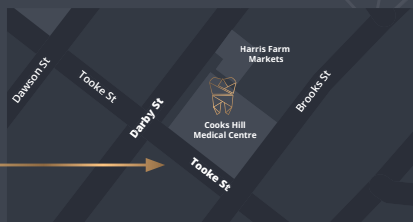
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FEATHERS, FUR AND FRIENDSHIP FAMILY NIGHT

Thank you to the fabulous Newcastle Grammar School community who celebrated the start of the school year, enjoying face painting, food, friendship, fun and much laughter at the 2024 Family Night.

Our youngest guests bounced and slid on the jumping castle and all agreed that the cutest attendees were the furry and feathery farm animals. Children giggled as they chased bubbles, tension was high as the Jenga towers threatened to fall and great concentration was required to conquer Connect Four. The senior students brought their tenacity and competitive spirit and gave generously of their time to serve and help at the event.

The evening coincided with Chinese Lunar New Year and our Languages department supplied some special costumed characters who proved

popular with the crowd. Thank you to the many volunteers and staff whose efforts made the evening such a success, and to the musicians, Anthea Wikstrom and Di Moss, who delighted the almost 700-strong crowd with their talent and enthusiasm.

Fortunately, the rain that had threatened earlier stayed away and as the sun set, the smiling faces and satisfied bellies evidenced the enjoyment of the evening.

Community at NGS is vital, as the partnership between home and school allows for the best outcomes for children. The friendships formed among students and parents throughout the 13-year schooling journey can be some of the strongest bonds that last a lifetime. Thank you for continuing to support NGS and investing in community through events such as Family Night.



MOTHER'S DAY LUNCH

THE VALUE OF CONNECTION

Over 170 women enjoyed the annual tradition of celebrating their role as mum, grandma, aunt or carer at this year's Newcastle Grammar School Mother's Day Lunch held at Merewether Surfhouse. The theme was community, collaboration and connection and the support shown to one another by the NGS women was truly celebrated.

Guest presenter, past NGS teacher, Hon Patricia Forsythe AM, spoke about the importance of community and connection from her perspective as Chancellor of the University of Newcastle.

Head of School, Mr Matt Macoustra, shared stories of the women in his life whose care, nurture, generosity and

humour have contributed greatly to his life, family and relationships.

Thank you to Major Sponsor, Lyndall Allan of Salt Property, for your generous support. A big shout out to The APP Group, BayDental, Blooms on Darby, Clare O'Hara Art, Core Project Group, Cosmoworld, Earth & Grace Skincare, The Grand Hotel Newcastle, HEAL Urgent Care, Helping Hand Group, Hunter Financial, The Market Basket Co, Merewether Professional Golf Shop, Merewether Surfhouse, Muse Pilates Studios, Pukara Estate, Quest Newcastle, SHAC Architects, Tulloch Wines, De Iuliis Wines and Manning Valley Free Range Eggs Pty Ltd. The prizes were fabulous and gratefully appreciated – many women walked away with beautiful baskets, vouchers, experiences and gifts.



MOTHER'S DAY A JOYFUL CELEBRATION

The Primary School Mother's Day Assembly was a heartwarming celebration that highlighted the talents and appreciation our students have for their mothers and special women in their lives. The Sandi Warren Performance Centre was beautifully decorated with vibrant artworks created by students from Kindergarten to Year 4.

The Primary Choirs, led by Miss Parkes and the String Ensembles, conducted by Ms MacQueen, brought a unique and touching element to the celebration. The Treblemakers Choir opened with a spirited rendition of *Born This Way* and The Tones followed with *When I Grow Up*, a song about aspirations and dreams for the future. The Semitones' performance of *Mother Mountain Guluga* added a culturally rich and emotional depth to the assembly, honouring the shared significance of motherhood in Indigenous communities.

The Minims Choir delighted the audience with *This Little Chick* and *The Little Seed*, both of which were filled with innocence and joy, reflecting the pure love and admiration the children have for their mothers. Finally, the Junior Passport



Choir closed the musical segment with *Tea and Coffee*, a light-hearted and cheerful song that brought smiles and laughter to everyone present.

In addition to the musical performances, the Assembly included photo tributes that highlighted the wonderful support and love from mothers and special women in the students' lives. This was a touching reminder of the impact these women have on the children's development and happiness.

“... brought smiles and laughter to everyone present.”



URSTRONG PRIMARY WELLBEING

Healthy relationships offer numerous benefits for students, enhancing their social, emotional, psychological and academic development. This year, the Primary students have been engaging with the URSTRONG friendship curriculum. URSTRONG is an award-winning international program that empowers children with friendship skills to create a culture of kindness in schools.

The Friendology curriculum is strongly aligned with the five PERMA (Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishment) domains of wellbeing, with the greatest emphasis on Relationships. The URSTRONG framework supports current research in Wellbeing Science that positive, healthy relationships contribute significantly to improved resilience, overall happiness and life satisfaction.

The K-6 program explicitly teaches children how to develop healthy friendships and manage conflict in a positive way. Our younger students have been practising how to name and tame their emotions and how friendships are like a rollercoaster; it is normal to have highs and lows. Learning how to make new friends and start a conversation has allowed our Year 3 and Year 4 students to discover similarities when sharing experiences and interests, fostering connection and understanding. Our older students have delved into dispelling myths around gender stereotypes and the 'pressure of perfection.'

Friendship skills encompass a range of abilities, including effective communication, empathy, active listening and conflict resolution. One of the key elements of this curriculum is that there is a common Language of

Friendship, that our students have been learning across all year levels as they journey on their quest to become a 'Friendship Ninja' – a person who is kind and friendly to everyone and surrounds themselves with people who value and nurture healthy friendships.

The URSTRONG weekly friendship lessons also provide role-play opportunities for our students, to practise empathy and compassion when responding to their friends' emotions and needs. This emotional support helps them navigate the ups and downs of childhood and builds resilience.

Our Primary families are encouraged to support the program by committing to becoming a URSTRONG family. The resources available for parents include videos, articles and activities that provide evidence-based support on how to empower your child to make healthy decisions in their friendships and resolve conflict respectfully.

Healthy friendships play a vital role in the holistic development of primary-aged children. They offer a sense of belonging and connectedness to a peer group, which is essential for students' social and emotional wellbeing. Children who feel connected to their peers are also more likely to enjoy school, engage in learning activities and seek help when needed.

After one term of implementing the URSTRONG friendship curriculum, the feedback from students, staff and parents who have engaged with the program at home, has been overwhelmingly positive. There is a strong sense within the Primary community that the skills and experiences gained from early friendships contribute to lifelong social competence, resilience and emotional wellbeing and lay the foundation for positive social relationships in adolescence and adulthood.

Mrs Jo Murdoch

Head of Wellbeing K-6



KB implementing the URSTRONG Friendology curriculum.

SECONDARY WELLBEING

We recognise that wellbeing is fundamental to a child's education and development. To meet the needs of our students at every age and stage, we have created wellbeing programs to support them along the way.

From Year 7, wellbeing is actioned within the vertical House system. All students are allocated to one of the four Houses: Tyrrell, Macquarie, Shortland and Hunter. Each House has dedicated mentor teachers and a Head of House, who meets with students each morning and in scheduled wellbeing periods throughout the week. The House structure is used as a vehicle for Positive Education activities, with a variety of themes to inspire students to consider wellbeing. Secondary students attend explicit Positive Education lessons and undertake wellbeing practices in Chapel services. Through these sessions, we purposefully seek to create opportunities for personal reflection and gratitude.

To enhance student engagement, two School Prefects have been assigned the portfolio of Student Wellbeing, giving our young people a voice in the development and intentional

outworking of wellbeing activities across all Secondary year groups.

Pastoral Care is delivered through the Positive Education approach and Visible Wellbeing™ program, utilising a range of pathways known as the SEARCH Framework – Strengths, Emotional Management, Attention and Awareness, Relationships, Coping and Habits & Goals. The School has also incorporated relevant aspects from alternative Wellbeing Science frameworks to ensure we are at the forefront of the latest wellbeing and best practice teaching.

The Visible Wellbeing program is evidence-based. It includes activities and resources that give members of our community a language and framework that is seen, heard and felt to ensure they understand and recognise wellbeing in themselves and others. Our approach can be found in all aspects of NGS life. With student wellbeing as a focus, our best practice teaching and learning promotes the development of skills and mindsets to flourish as adaptable, resilient and confident global citizens.



Joel Wright and Jenny Park (Year 10) with Mrs Carla Holmes.

NGS offers a holistic education, which means that the wellbeing of students and staff is a priority. Head of Positive Education, Ms Marnie Thomas, recently presented to staff about the latest research in Wellbeing Science. "Wellbeing must be central to what we do in schools, as it should also be in workplaces and any other human context, because wellbeing is about being human. Humans. Being. Well."

Wellbeing Science provides evidence for the inextricable link between happiness and success, but wellbeing also matters for its own sake. One of the ways that we prioritise humans being well is through our House structure and House Terms.

Every term we celebrate a different principle or theory of Wellbeing Science, looking at the research and then applying it in a range of ways. Several years ago, the Hunter House Term motto was Hope Flies. Hope is not just something that we discussed once, it is something that we continue to study with our students and bring to life not only in Positive Education lessons, but across the School.

Hope is defined as the perceived capability to derive pathways to desired goals and motivate oneself via agency thinking to use those pathways.

As one of our Year 10 students recently wrote, "Hope is an internal driving force that motivates accomplishment and is the foundation of improvement." In the words of 2016 Hunter student, Eve Turner, "Hope has the amazing capacity to unite individuals and create communities."

With this in mind, NGS will continue to talk about hope as a pathway to desired goals, a motivation for accomplishment and a foundation for the creation and growth of a connected community.

Ms Marnie Thomas

Head of Positive Education
Language and Literacy Teacher



TERM FOCUS

TYRRELL TERM: WISDOM

In Term 1, Tyrrell House had the privilege to present and share the virtue pillar of Wisdom with our community, which encompasses the character strengths of Judgement, Perspective, Curiosity, Creativity and Love of Learning.

Our delivery of Assembly items and mentor activities saw students and staff engaging with four Ancient Wisdoms and value systems from across the globe: Australian Indigenous Connection to Country, African philosophies of Ubuntu, Japan's secret of a good life, Ikigai and the Indian wellness and medical system known as Ayurveda.



Students enjoying treats on Tyrrell Day.

Secondary students took part in weekly fun challenges during Roll Call and Mentor time, that mirrored elements of these themes. Our favourites included dancing and holding yoga poses, origami folding and identifying national flags from around the world. These challenges culminated in a larger activity which took place in the final week of term, seeing over 30 of our mentor groups take part in an epic egg drop competition.

Tyrrell House Day involved all Year 5 to 12 students fundraising for The Vietnam Project, alongside our chosen charity, Take 3 For The Sea, through our bake sale and barbecue events. We raised over \$4000 due to the collaborative efforts of students, parents and staff. To engage further with Ayurvedic

practices on the day, Ms Patel led a relaxing outdoor 'sound bath' on the Arts Lawn, where students were invited to take a meditative break from screen time, while listening to singing bowls and watching the clouds float by peacefully above them.

We would like to thank our students and Mentors for their support of our initiatives and activities throughout the term. As we always say in Tyrrell House: Small ripples make big waves ...

This year's House Captains are Maya Agostino-Morrow and Henry Guest (Year 12) and Jasmine Old and Noah Lane (Year 9).

Ms Bobbie Patel and Miss Eily Fleming
Heads of Tyrrell House

TYRRELL TERM: WISDOM

On Hill Campus, each term is themed and coordinated by a different House and in Term 2, Hunter celebrated courage and the accompanying strengths of bravery, zest, perseverance and honesty. The motto, 'Reframe your fears', urged students to view challenges not as roadblocks, but as opportunities for growth.

Throughout the term, students delved into activities aimed at unpacking these strengths. From crafting mentor cheers that exude zest to volunteering at Community Lunches, they embodied the spirit of courage in action.

In commemorating the sacrifice and courage of the ANZACs during a special Chapel service, students adorned themselves with poppies and laid wreaths, honouring those who displayed bravery in the face of adversity. National Reconciliation Week deepened our



Hunter House serving the NGS community.

understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, fostering honesty and respect within our community.

As the term progressed, students showed perseverance towards their responsibilities and eagerly prepared for Hunter Day and Hunter House Chapel celebrations which provided opportunities to champion courage, serve the community and build camaraderie.

In this term of growth and exploration, we reiterated that courage isn't the absence of fear, but the willingness to face it head-on. Thanks for a season filled with bravery, zest, perseverance and honesty, and showing the courage to embrace every challenge that comes our way.

**Ms Matindi Twyford-Moore
and Ms Chantal Byrnes**
Heads of Hunter House

MUSIC FESTIVAL TRADITION AND TALENT

One of the highlights on the Senior School calendar is the annual House Music Festival. Featuring students in Years 10 to 12, the Music Festival is a celebration and showcase of artistic talents, providing an opportunity to harness their strengths, including leadership and teamwork, within the House structure.

The Music Festival has been a feature at NGS for decades and continues to be one of the most vibrant and inclusive events, with 100% student participation and 110% enthusiasm! Swimming and Athletic Carnivals are common in many schools, but the Music Festival is a unique aspect of NGS culture. It stands as a cornerstone of our School's commitment to fostering creativity, building community and celebrating inclusion. The Music Festival is not just about talent and the performance on the day – the collaborative process in the weeks prior cultivate essential skills such as teamwork, communication and creativity, while students work towards something bigger than themselves.

Each year, the performances enthrall and inspire. The acapella groups captivated the audience with their harmonies, the instrumental pieces showcased impressive musical talent and the Whole House dances spectacularly displayed coordination and energy. Whilst the competition was fierce, we congratulate Shortland House as the overall Champions for 2024, winning the Whole House dance and the instrumental sections. Congratulations also to Tyrrell House and Hunter House who came equal first in the vocals.

The Music Festival is more than just a competition; it is a celebration of our students' strengths and talents and a testament to the importance of the arts in education. We are deeply grateful to all the students involved in organising the Music Festival and look forward to continuing this tradition.

Ms Jordan Grant
Shortland Head of House



VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA HANDS ON HUMANITY

Since 2016, the Newcastle Grammar School community has supported the 'Vietnam Project'. We fundraise throughout the year and some students visit our sister school in Long Hai, Vietnam, to teach and serve in the December school holidays. While we were unable to travel for a few years, we have continued to provide financial support to their school, teachers, children and community. This support enables some of the most disadvantaged students to have clean school uniforms, obtain meals at school and enjoy major events like Tét (Lunar New Year).

The 2023 tour, provided the opportunity to re-establish the strong bond between NGS and Long Hai. "From the moment we arrived, it felt like no time had passed and our students made immediate connections both in and outside the classrooms. Cultural barriers fell away as the students engaged in an exchange of knowledge and fun through the teaching sessions," said Mr Drew Collins. NGS students also participated in several service activities including the refit of a sewing room which is used for trade training skills, gardening for food supplies, cleaning, office fit-out, delivery of sporting equipment, friendly games of football between both schools and the collation of care packages for both the students and staff at Long Hai. This is often the only time in the year when 'treats' make their way home – Tim-Tams are favourites amongst the children. However, rice, oil, biscuits, washing powder, fish oil and other staple items help to make their lives easier and are appreciated.



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My Huong, the school Director, spoke about her past experiences and the reasons behind her passion and mission. Her story is amazing and inspirational and has taken her from Vietnam to Australia and Africa. My Huong now joyfully serves her community in Long Hai and the Mekong.

The 30 NGS students and five staff came away with a new sense of perspective and purpose and were incredibly grateful for the opportunity to interact with this special community in meaningful ways. The emotion felt by all the students was palpable. Comments from students include, "I will never take my life for granted", and, "I know what it means when NGS says healthy wellbeing equals doing good and feeling good". We are so incredibly lucky to be able to travel again to experience cultures different from our own.

The Vietnam and Cambodia tour also included visits to social enterprises in both countries. One of the highlights was the visit to Café Noir, where, in complete darkness, we were served by blind staff to give a sense of empathy for the way they go about their daily lives. Organised by Caroline O'Brien from the Australian Educational Travel Company, our students experienced workshops, restaurants and organisations that focus on providing opportunities to those in need, giving them the skills to share within their local communities.

The experiential learning service opportunity has become an integral part of our annual student and staff offerings at NGS. Coupled with the Round Square IDEALS, we aim to strengthen these ties again as we travel with an even larger group at the end of the year.

Mr Drew Collins

Director of Operations and Experiential Learning

1. Year 10 students conducting a lesson.
2. Students learning early morning Tai Chi.
3. NGS tour group at the entrance to the Long Hai school.

JAPAN 2024: LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL IMMERSION

In April, 25 students accompanied by three staff members travelled to Japan for two weeks as part of our 2024 Japan Tour, aimed at strengthening our students' knowledge of Japanese culture and language.

The first leg of the tour took students to Tokyo, Japan's capital, one of the largest cities on Earth, where the ultra-modern blends seamlessly with the old. From day one, students learned to navigate busy cityscapes, train stations and Tokyo's vast train network. They learned to appreciate the organisation required to manage such a high population and empathised with the Japanese people's ability to maintain harmony and order within such an environment. Students saw a Sumo performance, visited galleries featuring contemporary exhibitions and works by Hokusai, and explored religious sites Senso-ji temple and Meiji Jingu shrine, deepening their appreciation for Tokyo's spiritual and historical aspects.

The next leg of the tour took the group to Kyoto, the ancient capital of Japan. Students visited historic sites such as



Kinkaku-ji Temple, Fushimi Inari Shrine, Heian Jingu Shrine and Kiyomizu-dera Temple. They noted how serenity and the past have been preserved in Kyoto, contrasting with Tokyo's modernity – a nice change of pace for some.

While in Kyoto, the group took a day trip to Hiroshima where students visited the Hiroshima Peace Park and the Atomic Bomb Dome. While these sites were confronting, students were moved by the museum exhibition as they were reminded of the atrocities of war by seeing first-hand accounts and relics of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. Representing Newcastle Grammar School's collective wish for peace, the group donated 1,000 paper cranes made by the NGS community to the Children's Peace Monument, finishing the day on the island of Miyajima.

The next leg took us to Imabari, on the Japanese island of Shikoku, where students spent three days at the host school, Asakura Junior High School. Our students experienced the school's rigorous routine, participated in club activities, ran games at a local elementary school, served lunch

and joined Language, Mathematics, History and Science classes with their buddies. Most importantly, students developed bonds with their buddies and will continue to stay in touch. These connections were a highlight of the tour and we thank English Teacher Rie Hato and Principal Makoto Takashi for this valuable opportunity.

The tour concluded in Osaka, with visits to Osaka Castle and the students enjoyed the excitement of Universal Studios.

This experience allowed students to immerse themselves in the language and culture that they have spent so much time learning about. Each day, students were able to challenge themselves through trying new things and interacting with people even when they were nervous. It was pleasing to watch students grow throughout the tour and to hear them talk about how this was a life changing experience. Students were exemplary when representing NGS in Japan and are to be commended for upholding the RISE values each day.

Mr Jack Wheeler
Language and Literacy Teacher



1. Students in English classes at Asakura JHS.

2. The touring group with our 1000 paper cranes in Hiroshima.

ONE ENCHANTED EVENING

YEAR 11 BALL

One of the highlights of the NGS journey is the Year 11 Ball and this year's was especially enchanting. The rite of passage begins in Term 1, where every Friday afternoon the students can be found learning to dance in the Horbury Hunt Hall.

The Year 11 cohort likened their experience to learning how to swim ... or dog paddle in some cases! Drawing upon this metaphor, as a group they realised that, "The water is always cold when you first jump in." Indeed, in the beginning, some felt out of their depth and needed rescuing. By harnessing teamwork, perseverance and bravery, together they were able to float.

While the Year 11 Ball reflects a significant moment in time as our Year 11 students approach their final laps of school, the most important part of the evening is the expression of gratitude. "It is our support crew, cheering us on from the sideline, who we need to thank."

Here are some extracts from our Student Representatives' speeches:

Tonight is an acknowledgement of how far we have come and how close we are to the finish line. As we plunge into the deep end of this final lap, not everyone will take to the water with ease. There will be struggles and adversities that we will have to face. But with the help of our family, teachers and peers, we know that all of us will make it to the other side.

As a swimmer myself, I know how cold and daunting the water looks before you jump in. Swimming may be an individual sport, but that doesn't mean I do it alone. Every individual in this cohort will face their own personal challenges throughout the next two years. However, that doesn't mean they can't rely on the encouragement of their friends and family just as I rely on the support and guidance from my coach, my friends and my family. With this, I would like to thank those who have provided support and made this night possible ...

At our first dance practice this term, I imagine everyone felt out of their depths. Clumsy and confused, I felt the music was moving way too fast.

It is in moments like these, where we can see one another struggling, that we have the opportunity to shape our story – the story of the Class of 2025. Our story is shaped by many moments, watching individuals float, floating together on nights like this, but most significantly, the moments we chose to rescue one another.

I have always found it easier to jump in headfirst when the water is cold. No use delaying the inevitable. The next two years are sure to be full of new challenges and we are lucky to have so much to look forward to during these years, with so many wonderful people supporting us through it all.

Thank you so much to Year 11 and the entire NGS community for their wonderful support of the Year 11 Ball. Here is to the vast ocean of experiences that await you all. We are so proud of you.





LEARN, GROW, SERVE

CREATIVE AND PERFORMING ARTS

Community service is an integral part of the NGS Music program and this was proudly on display when students from the Senior Choir sang as part of the Anzac Day Dawn Service and Commemorative Service in Civic Park.

They performed alongside the Australian Military Wives Choir and the Vocal Company, supporting the Australian Army Band Newcastle. These dedicated students volunteered their evenings during Term 1 and school holidays to prepare for the performances, representing their school with distinction, and they found it an incredible privilege to honour our servicemen and women.



The 2024 NGS Music Camp was held at the Sydney Academy of Sport and Recreation in Narrabeen. Students spent an action-packed weekend rehearsing new and challenging repertoire, whilst perfecting their ensemble skills. To provide them with rich and unique experiences, they were placed in speciality ensembles and worked on a large range of pieces to actively develop their collaborative skills. There were many performance opportunities, and the final evening's Camp Concert was a particularly wonderful celebration of the love of music. Leadership and teamwork skills were grown and developed within the Co-Curricular Music program, with all students participating in the Initiative Program offered at the Sydney

Academy. We express our thanks to the Music Department team of Mrs Cutler, Mr Sheringham, Mrs Naulu, Ms MacQueen, Mr Burley and Mrs Dunlop, as well as the talented peripatetic staff, Mr Tracy and Mr Wilson-Kellaway, who worked tirelessly to provide this amazing experience for the students.

Mrs Sara Cutler

Assistant Head of CAPA

1. Orchestra performs at Easter Eucharist.
2. NGS Senior Choir with The Very Reverend Katherine Bowyer – Dean of Newcastle and Choir Director Mrs Sara Cutler at the ANZAC Commemorative Service in Civic Park.
3. Music Camp.



CO-CURRICULAR INNOVATION, CREATIVITY, PRODUCTION

Art Fusion

Art Fusion, our new and innovative art program tailored to students in Years 5 to 8, is igniting creativity and fostering artistic expression. Led by the visionary Lauren Wiltshire from BASE Art Space, Art Fusion sets out to reimagine great masterpieces through a contemporary lens, inspiring students to explore and innovate.

Drawing inspiration from the rich tapestry of contemporary and street art, students embark on a journey of artistic discovery. They delve into the works of influential artists like Sally Gabori and Ken Done, studying their techniques and themes to inform their own creative endeavours.

Through a diverse range of mediums, including oil pastel, willow vine, acrylic, paper, ink pen, watercolour and charcoal, students experiment with form and texture, honing their skills and expanding their artistic repertoire. The program places a strong emphasis on mastering the elements of art, with a particular focus on line, shape and colour. Students delve deeper into colour theory and colour wheels, unlocking new avenues of expression and creativity.

Art Fusion recognises the transformative power of creative and visual arts, enriching the lives of students and nurturing their growth in this age of exploration and self-discovery.



1. Students draw inspiration from contemporary and street art in Art Fusion.

2. Annabel Barker (Year 6).

3. AMPD students in action.



AMPD

The brand-new Co-Curricular Contemporary Music program Alternative Music Performance and Development (AMPD) has proven to be a smash hit, with 26 students from Years 7 to 11 now participating in the activity. This program is designed to arm students with essential music industry skills, covering group and solo performance, rehearsal techniques, digital media in music, live sound setup, gig booking, songwriting, and more, all customised to students' interests through self-directed learning. Facilitated through a partnership with The University of Newcastle's Conservatorium of Music, students have been working with experts to develop their performance skills in small bands, ensembles and learn about the processes of music production.

In Term 1 the AMPD students had their first experience recording songs in the industry-standard facilities at the Conservatorium. This was followed up with lessons on music production software and the process of editing tracks, with further studio sessions planned for later in the year to refine their craft. Our rock bands have recorded popular hits like *Zombie* by The Cranberries, *Wanted Dead or Alive* by Bon Jovi, *Valerie* by Amy Winehouse, *Sweet Child of Mine* by Guns N' Roses, *Lovely* by Billie Eilish and *Vampire* by Olivia Rodrigo.

They have also had access to exciting performance opportunities, such as The University of Newcastle's Collaborative Music Making Concert. Under the passionate leadership of Mr Leigh Sheringham, AMPD has quickly grown into an activity of choice for our aspiring musicians.

Mr Daniel Kozey

Director of Co-curricular K-12



1

PRIMARY SPORT

The sporting calendar began with students displaying outstanding achievements in Hockey, Mountain Biking, Swimming, Cross Country, Rugby League and Futsal.

Adding a fresh dimension to this year's activities, Newcastle Grammar School Primary introduced a new event, with 14 students participating in a Hockey Gala Day in Maitland. This included skill enhancement sessions covering shooting, tackling, passing and dribbling followed by a four-team round-robin tournament. The NGS teams quickly found their rhythm, scoring in all games before concluding the hot day under the field sprinklers! Many students expressed a newfound enthusiasm and interest in hockey.

Our Stage 3 students continued their strong interest in Rugby League, entering two teams in the nine-a-side Rugby League Gala held in Cessnock. Both teams remained undefeated, clinching a total of five wins and one draw against various Hunter Region schools. The display of skill and teamwork was particularly impressive. Bronx Dilliger and Sonny Smith (Year 6) and Rory Rogers (Year 5) were selected to trial for the CIS Primary Rugby League Team in Sydney. Bronx Dillinger and Sonny Smith secured spots in the 17-man squad to compete at the NSW Primary School Sports Association (NSWPSSA) State Championships.



2

The Mountain Biking enthusiasm continued this year, with 20 riders participating in the NSW Schools Cross Country Championship at the Glenrock tracks. Despite morning rain, the event saw spirited competition on the challenging terrain, resulting in standout performances from Willow Frazer (Year 6), Emma Roberts (Year 1) and John-Carlo Olivares-Green (Year 6). Our team claimed the title of Top Primary School in NSW, amassing 349 points and continuing their dominance in the sport.



3





Swimming results demonstrated our students' dedication, with Daisy Falconer and Rachel Sverdlov (Year 5) progressing from the Hunter Region and CIS Championships to compete at the NSWPSA State Swimming Championships. Daisy secured an impressive 2nd place in breaststroke and 3rd place in freestyle and butterfly in the Multi-Class Division, while Rachel Sverdlov continued to set School records in the Under 10 Girls Division, taking her total to four for the season.

The annual HRIS Primary Cross Country event saw active participation despite wet conditions, with NGS students leading the charge. Notable highlights included Tom Boyn's (Year 4) first-place finish in the 10 year old boys 2km race, with an electric time of 6:53.00. Eight students have progressed to the Combined Independent Schools (CIS) Championships.

NGS Primary students have continued to excel across various sporting events in 2024, showcasing their skills, teamwork and sportsmanship. Congratulations to all of this semester's representatives as we set our sights on more success in Semester 2.

Mr Cameron Logan

Primary Sport Coordinator

1. Under 12 Boys Rugby League Team.

From top left: Sonny Smith, Harrison Eady, Sammy Hargreaves, Jasper Tanks, Bronx Dillinger, Cooper Whitehorn, Mason Jach, Harrison Webb.

Front: Hunter Wilson, Grayson Shirlaw, Daniel Lewis, Riley Cross, Noah Brady, Rupert Meads, Hassan Zoghbi.

2. John Jenner (Year 5) - Hockey NSW Gala Day.

3. Olive McKay, Cooper Clymer, Max Niven, Advait Uthappa and Harry Llewellyn - Hockey NSW Gala Day.

4. Willow Frazer (Year 6).

5. Primary Swimming Carnival.

6. Primary Athletics Carnival.

7. Cross Country Carnival.

SECONDARY SPORT

NSW CIS Football Cup

The NSW Combined Independent Schools (CIS) Football Cup stands as the premier football competition for students in NSW Independent Schools. Building on exceptional regional results in 2023, NGS proudly entered both boys' and girls' First XI teams into this esteemed tournament for the first time.

In the initial rounds, our girls faced St Luke's Grammar School, while our boys advanced to the Plate quarter-final against Moriah College with a 4-0 defeat of Cranbrook School and harbour aspirations for a Grand Final berth at the statewide level. Guided by our Head of PDHPE, Mr Juchniewicz, and Newcastle Football legend, Clayton Zane, the success of our teams bodes well for future Football endeavours.

Swimming HRIS and AICES Champions

After their sixth consecutive win at Hunter Region Independent Schools (HRIS) Division 1 Swimming Championships, our secondary swim team competed in the Association of Independent Co-Educational Schools (AICES) championships, emerging as Champion School in both points and medals. They secured 20 Gold, 8 Silver and 10 Bronze medals, reinforcing NGS as the top HRIS school. Alexandra Noonan (Year 10), Alice Jeffery (Year 12), Jacob Samokhin (Year 8), Ruby Carter (Year 8) and William Jeffery (Year 12) set new records, with Ruby and William named AICES Age Champions. Relay teams excelled with 5 Gold, 2 Silver and 2 Bronze medals. Congratulations to all students for their dedication and for displaying teamwork and excellence in swimming.



HRIS Cross Country Champions

The NGS Secondary Cross Country team participated in the HRIS Division 1 Cross Country Championships. Despite challenging course conditions, our students showcased determination, leading to NGS securing the Overall Championship for the third consecutive year and for the fourth time in five years. Our teams excelled in various age categories, particularly in the 13 Boys, 14 Boys, 15 Boys, 16 Girls and 17 Boys events. Special congratulations go to Annabelle Miller (Year 11), Harry Boyn (Year 11), Olivia Mullard (Year 7) and Rosie Boyn (Year 10) for their outstanding performances, earning the Age Champion titles in their respective events.

NGS Netball Club

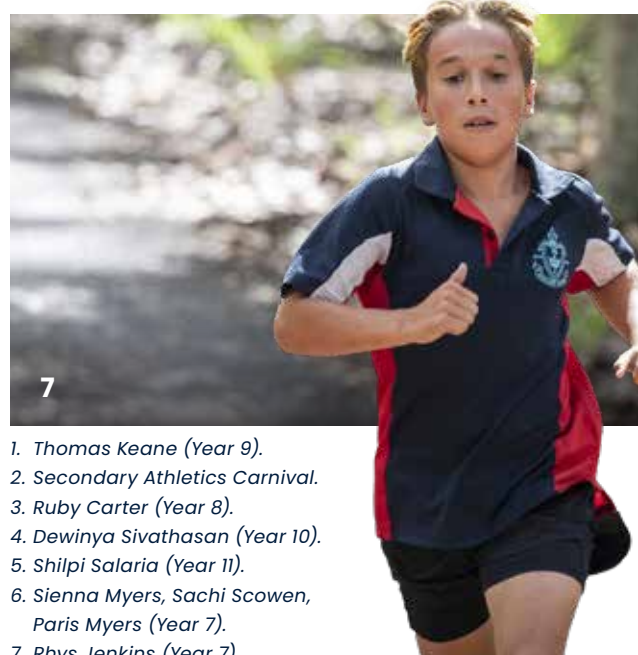
In 2024, NGS boasts an impressive lineup of eleven netball teams, with each team benefiting from the guidance of experienced coaches. With a focus on actively building alumni connections, many of our younger teams have former students returning as mentors, imparting invaluable knowledge and fostering a sense of continuity within the program.

Complementing on-court skills development, NGS offers an Umpiring Development Program, equipping students with the knowledge and skills necessary to officiate games confidently. Umpire Development Clinics held throughout the season provide a platform for players to learn new rules, receive mentoring and prepare for umpiring duties. The Clinics also serve to build community off the court.

One of the program's highlights is the opportunity for students to play alongside their friends from school, fostering bonds and camaraderie both on and off the court. This emphasis on friendship and community contributes to the development of a strong and supportive netball culture at NGS, enriching the overall experience for all involved.

Ms Leah Gilbert

Head of Athletic Performance



1. Thomas Keane (Year 9).
2. Secondary Athletics Carnival.
3. Ruby Carter (Year 8).
4. Dewinya Sivathanasan (Year 10).
5. Shilpi Salaria (Year 11).
6. Sienna Myers, Sachi Scowen, Paris Myers (Year 7).
7. Rhys Jenkins (Year 7).

JIN HEO

SKATING TO SUCCESS

Head of Athlete Development, Sam Poolman, sat down with Year 7 student, Jin Heo, who joined Newcastle Grammar School's Supporting Athlete Performance (SAP) program at the start of 2024. Jin is a figure skater and violinist with a passion for excellence in sport and music.

How have you settled into NGS?

I have settled into NGS quite well. There are some habits that I need to work on more, like checking my Schoolbox or my schedule each day to see which classes/events I have, so those habits can become more consistent.

What have you enjoyed most about being in Year 7?

The most enjoyable thing about Year 7 was meeting new teachers and classmates in a new environment that I now get to learn with every day.

How do you juggle your training, academic studies and passion for music?

It is hard to juggle all my training, school and violin. I manage to get most of my things done by practising violin on the afternoons I don't have skating, or on the weekends. Nearly all my skating practices are in the

morning and I think that makes it easier to manage my time for school and my music.

What do you love about figure skating?

I love that I can express my feelings when I skate my programs. I can also try to learn new skills that might be challenging or easy.

What would you say are your strengths in figure skating?

My strengths are my optimism and self-motivation. Even when I don't feel my best, I still try to push away the bad feelings and encourage myself to stay positive.

Do you love competing?

I do enjoy competing against myself and other competitors. There are challenges, like getting nervous, scared or overthinking. However, in the end, I do love competing.

How many hours do you train a week for figure skating?

I train for 10 hours on the ice and 2-4 hours off the ice.

What are your sporting goals?

My overall sporting goal is to go to the Olympics. This year, my goal is to get into Nationals again and place on the podium.

Who are your biggest supporters?

My biggest supporters are my parents as they drive me to skating and competitions early in the morning. My coaches are also big supporters because they always encourage me to push forward and keep going. The NGS teachers support me too, as they help me with schoolwork challenges.

What is your proudest achievement thus far?

My proudest achievement overall is probably getting into Nationals last year for figure skating. Even though I didn't win, I tried my best and still came sixth and received a special pin for one of the elements in my program.

“My strengths are my optimism and self-motivation. Even when I don't feel my best, I still try to push away the bad feelings and encourage myself to stay positive.”



Is there a role model you look up to or who inspires you?

My role model is my coach, Kailani Craine (2018 Winter Olympian and 12-time Australian National Figure Skating Champion), because she always tries to stay positive, even when she doesn't feel her best. Her story of becoming a figure skater is very inspiring.

Established in 2020, the Supporting Athlete Performance (SAP) program was designed to enable athletes to maintain their high academic achievements while pursuing excellence in their athletic endeavours. This initiative is open to a carefully selected group of exceptional secondary students, chosen based on their alignment with both the NGS Sporting Framework and Sport Australia FTEM Model. Since its inception, our student-athletes have consistently pushed their limits, achieving remarkable growth and accomplishments.

Ms Sam Poolman

Head of Athlete Development



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But don't need a
lengthy hospital wait.

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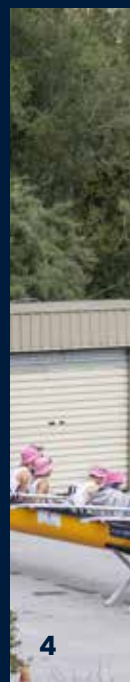
*Non life threatening acute injury and illness.
\$295 treatment fee

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ROWING NEW ZEALAND AN ADVENTURE OF ENDURANCE

Eleven athletes from the NGS Rowing Program embarked on a memorable adventure to New Zealand at the beginning of the year. This group, comprising athletes from Years 10 to 12, competed in the South Island Rowing Championships marking the beginning of an unforgettable experience. Amidst the stunning landscapes of Queenstown, they indulged in various activities, from hiking Queenstown Hill to cycling through picturesque routes.

One of the trip's highlights was a challenging 60km bike tour from Arrowtown to Queenstown, encompassing gravel tracks, footpaths and narrow mountain bike (MTB) tracks with steep descents and even steeper climbs. Despite the arduous route, the rowers and their coaches tackled it with determination, fuelled by shared packets of jelly snakes. Despite being advised to consider skipping the extra 20km detour for lunch at Gibbston, or opting for

e-bikes, our tough rowers all chose the standard MTB option. Testing their endurance, they persevered, completing the journey with a sense of accomplishment and rounding off their adventure with a well-deserved dinner.

Despite a delay in racing due to inclement weather, the students utilised the time for study and a spirited group run, achieving numerous personal bests. They made the most of their time, alternating between rowing sessions and outdoor excursions. A highlight was the demanding hike up Queenstown Hill, offering panoramic views as a reward.

Although the first day was postponed, the following days showcased the team's resilience and skill, with notable achievements in various races. The camaraderie among teammates and coaches, coupled with the breathtaking backdrop of New Zealand's natural beauty, made the trip an unforgettable experience.



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Gratitude is extended to the coaches, parents and organisers for orchestrating such a remarkable opportunity, as well as to the supportive parents who made it possible. The New Zealand 2024 Rowing Tour left an indelible mark on all who participated, embodying the spirit of teamwork, determination and adventure.

Mr Brad Smith
Head of Rowing and
Outdoor Adventure



1. Quad training – Molly Boyle, Annabel McKensey (Year 11), Roxanna Brown and Heidi McKensey (Year 10).
2. A fun squad training session – their first attempt at rowing an Octuple.
3. Mitchell Chung, Annabel McKensey, Molly Boyle (Year 11) and Vincent Miteff (Year 12), launching into Lake Hayes.
4. Rest time and preparing for the next session.
5. Ronan Brown (Year 11) – Single training on Lake Hayes Queenstown New Zealand.
6. Annabel McKensey (Year 11).
7. Lake Hayes Queenstown South Island Rowing Tour.

CLASS OF 2019

BLAINE STUBBS

COMMITTED TO SERVE

BMus, Army Reservist, Army Band (Trumpet)

Fittingly set against a backdrop of guitars, Newcastle Grammar School alumnus, Blaine Stubbs, shares his post-2019 graduation journey with enthusiasm.

Having secured an early acceptance to The University of Newcastle, Blaine bid farewell to NGS in pursuit of a Bachelor of Music. It was during his formative years, particularly in the Year 7 Concert Band Program, that Blaine's passion for music found its voice. With a trumpet placed in his hands, the seeds of his musical career were sown. As he honed his skills on both the trumpet and the bugle, Blaine's appreciation for the artistry of music flourished into a steadfast ambition to make music his chosen career. Following his first degree, Blaine transitioned into a Master of Education at the University of New England.

Upon finishing school and alongside his university studies, he served as an Army Reservist, completing basic military training at Kapooka in early 2020. He pursued specialised military musician training and successfully auditioned as a trumpeter for the prestigious Army Band, a role he proudly continues to fulfill.

His commitment to community welfare shines through in his extensive volunteer work. Blaine generously devotes approximately 90 days each year to his reservist duties and serves as a volunteer army cadet staff member.

Among the highlights of his career are his contributions to the community, such as the support efforts in Lismore following the floods in 2022. He recently performed the solo



Blaine Stubbs Class of 2019 playing bugle in Christ Church Cathedral – NGS ANZAC Day Service.

bugle at the Newcastle ANZAC Day service as well as at 14 different schools in the region during their ANZAC services.

Reflecting on his formative years at NGS, Blaine has fond memories and received invaluable guidance from dedicated staff members, especially in the Music Faculty and Cadets (SATU). They each played pivotal roles in shaping Blaine's journey, nurturing his musical talents and fostering his interest in the Army Reserves.

Blaine's journey at NGS began in Kindergarten and continued through to his Year 12 Graduation, marking a significant chapter in his life. Among the notable highlights are the Year 10 Musical, and his involvement in the Jazz Band, where he honed his trumpet skills. These influential experiences laid the groundwork for Blaine's continued growth and success, setting the stage for his future endeavours in both music and military service. Blaine underscores the profound impact of giving back and the transformative power it holds. For him, the essence of education lies not only in imparting knowledge, but also in shaping young minds, guiding them towards unforeseen opportunities. Whether it's inspiring a student to pursue a career as an army band reservist, or nurturing their aspirations in the realm of a professional career in music, Blaine's dedication to empowering the next generation is evident.

As he looks ahead, he remains committed to advancing his career, both within the Army Reserve and in the field of education. With a passion for travel and a dedication to making a meaningful difference in the lives of his future students, Blaine is poised for a path marked by growth, service, and continued impact.



NGS ALUMNI

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Visit the NGS Alumni platform
alumni.ngs.nsw.edu.au

CLASS OF 2003

CHRIS THORNTON

A TASTE OF THE GOOD LIFE

When Chris graduated from NGS, he already knew — in broad strokes — that his future lay in food.

Cutting his teeth in the school kitchens as part of his Hospitality elective in Years 11 and 12, as well as

using real-world kitchens as part of NGS's Work Experience program, Chris discovered a passion for food and for the fast-paced world of hospitality. After graduating from NGS, Chris completed a culinary apprenticeship and Advanced Diploma in Commercial Cookery in the Hunter Valley and Newcastle. "As an apprentice, I was lucky enough to win multiple competitions, culminating in the Brett Graham Scholarship,

which took me to London to work at The Ledbury — one of the world's top restaurants." (The Ledbury was recently voted the number one restaurant in London!)

Following several years at The Ledbury, Chris returned to Newcastle where he took on his first role as Head Chef, before opening the renowned Restaurant Mason in 2011, regarded as one of the top regional restaurants in NSW. Deciding to take a break from the 'always on' lifestyle that operating a hospitality business demands, Chris and his team decided to close the restaurant in 2022.

Reflecting on his culinary career, Chris says, "I was lucky enough to work with some incredible mentors and peers [who] continually pushed and inspired me to chase excellence." Chris has taken his career in a new direction, putting his work ethic to good use in the mining sector. You can still find him in the kitchen, catering private events and working with charities. "[I love] the opportunity to cook for people in their homes, and to be able to interact with them on a personal level and talk about food and wine."

Recalling his time at NGS, Chris is grateful for the opportunities that the holistic curriculum afforded him. "NGS put me in a position to find my true passion which was cooking," he says. "It was the connections that I made whilst receiving my education that have helped me the most along the way."

Chris is happily married with three young sons and is involved in junior rugby coaching. When he's not on the sidelines or in the kitchen, he enjoys exploring the country with his family in their caravan. We asked if he had any advice for current students, he said, "Find something you're passionate about and commit yourself to excel at it. If you love what you do, it's easy to get up for work every day."



Chris Thornton worked at London's premier restaurant, The Ledbury.

“... I was lucky enough to win multiple competitions, culminating in the Brett Graham Scholarship, which took me to London to work at The Ledbury — one of the world's top restaurants.”

YOUR GIVING WILL IMPACT FUTURE GENERATIONS

For over 100 years, Newcastle Grammar School has been a beacon of educational excellence in the community. As students enter our doors, they are enriched by a quality educational experience that develops the whole child and prepares them for the complexities of the future.

The School has a history of giving generously towards building projects and assisting families and students, to access a life-changing quality education. Now is the time to impact the lives of current and future students – to provide the opportunity for more students to access the facilities and transformational tools, resources, programs and wellbeing support that distinguishes NGS as the leading school in the region. The power of collective community giving can truly create a legacy. The joy of seeing the positive impact that your contribution makes now and for future generations of NGS students is tangible.

The NGS Cool the School campaign involves raising funds for the supply and installation of air-conditioning to our two major function areas – the Sandi Warren Performance Centre at Park Campus and the Horbury Hunt Hall at Hill Campus. Both spaces are used regularly by students, staff, parents and visitors for assemblies, examinations and serving the broader Newcastle community. Installing air conditioning in these spaces will allow for greater learning and comfort for all users.

School fees and government grants alone do not provide for the ongoing advancement of Newcastle Grammar School, therefore we rely on the generosity of our community to achieve the School's broader educational aspirations and vision.

Our goal for this project is \$400,000. Can you help us reach our Cool the School target to benefit students now and into the future? Every gift, regardless of size, will help shape the future of NGS.

All donations over \$2 to these funds are tax deductible.

Contact giving@ngs.nsw.edu.au

1. Horbury Hunt Hall, built in 1878, is a heritage-listed church hall, designed by John Horbury Hunt. This 'pro-cathedral' was built to house the congregation whilst construction of Christ Church Cathedral was underway.
2. 1999 saw the purchase and opening of Park Campus (formerly Newcastle Teachers' College) which included the Sandi Warren Performance Centre, named after the NGS former Board Chair.



Donate now





1

THE SWEET SOUND OF GENEROSITY

A heartfelt thank you goes to Sandra Lindsay, the proud founder of well-known local music store, Musos Corner, who donated a beautiful Yamaha U1J PE upright piano in memory of her son and NGS parent, Andrew 'Andy' Lindsay.

A small ceremony was held in one of the Hill Campus music classrooms, where it will reside. The piano was recently unveiled, with a plaque dedicated to honouring Andy's legacy and devotion to music, equipment and "the joy of putting the right piece of gear into the right people's hands."

Talented Year 12 student Alex Moss had the privilege of playing the debut piece, *Nocturne in Db Major* by Chopin, which she executed exquisitely.

Andy contributed generously to the people of Newcastle through his talent, knowledge and kindness throughout his life. We know that Andy's engaging spirit will live on through the melodies made on this instrument by music students and staff for many years.

To the Lindsay family – on behalf of current and future students – thank you for your thoughtful gift.



2

1. Matt Macoustra, Sandra Lindsay, Miles Lindsay (Year 6), Jules Lindsay (Year 3) and Linda Lindsay.
2. The plaque to honour Andrew Lindsay's legacy.

“... a plaque dedicated to honouring Andy's legacy and devotion to music, equipment and “the joy of putting the right piece of gear into the right people's hands.”



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We're proud to be part of the NGS family and are committed to providing high quality health care to the Newcastle community



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