

SYDNEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL



PROSPECTUS

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Mr SM McPherson
Headmaster



Headmaster's Introduction

It is an honour to return to Grammar as the thirteenth Headmaster. This is after twenty-five years in the United Kingdom, where for the last ten years I was the Headmaster of Worth School, and for the fifteen before that I was a master and, latterly, a housemaster at Eton College.

Grammar has changed very little since I knew it when I was a master here. Its commitment to the highest of standards across all areas of endeavour is as strong as it ever was; its boys are as wide ranging in their interests and passions as they ever were; its masters are as dedicated to their subjects and to the boys they teach as they always have been, and there is the same excitement about learning, about being interested in things in and beyond the classroom for their own sake, and about drinking deeply at the well as I remember there being when I last knew the School. All of this makes me very excited to be part of Grammar again.

Independent of both church and state, Grammar draws boys from all over Sydney and from very different backgrounds. The mix of boys here is in itself an education. As an academically-focused school, learning is at the heart of all we do. But our understanding of learning goes well beyond the short-term aim of success in examination results. Our hope is that a Grammar education will instill in boys not only broad, worthwhile knowledge and transferable skills, but a strong set of values and an instinct for service in the world beyond school. At Grammar we believe in a broad and enriching programme of extra-curricular activities – sport, music, debating, drama and cadets to name but a few of the many on offer – as equally formative experiences in discerning values and developing character. As he moves through the School, we hope each Grammar boy will not only form lifelong friendships, but begin to discover what is ultimately fulfilling in life and what brings him joy.

Mr SM McPherson
Headmaster



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THE BUILDING WAS
COLLECTED BY THE
REV. STANTON AUSTIN
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Brief History of the School

Sydney Grammar School is one of the oldest schools in Australia. Its ancestor, the Sydney Public Free Grammar School, opened in 1825 with LH Halloran as Headmaster. In 1830, Sydney College was founded. Sir Francis Forbes, Chief Justice, became President of the College and laid the foundation stone of the present building in College Street on the 26th of January 1830. In 1835 Sydney College opened in this building with WT Cape as Headmaster. In 1842 he resigned and was succeeded by TH Braim. In 1850 Sydney College was closed. Sydney Grammar School was founded by Act of Parliament in 1854, after Sir Henry Parkes, the Father of Australian Federation, tabled a petition from a group of citizens concerned that the fledgling University of Sydney should have a 'nursery' to provide it with well-prepared undergraduates.

The re-founded School's work commenced in 1857, in the College Street buildings which had been occupied immediately before this by the University of Sydney. Grammar has remained here ever since. More recently, Preparatory Schools at St Ives and Edgecliff have been established, and we take approximately one hundred and twenty boys each year from these two institutions. The modern College Street has around eleven hundred boys, St Ives over four hundred, and Edgecliff three hundred. Our boys now proceed from the School to a

variety of universities in New South Wales and beyond, but the basic purpose of Grammar as set out in the Act – 'to confer on all classes and denominations of Her Majesty's subjects resident in the Colony of New South Wales, without any distinction whatsoever, the advantages of a regular and liberal course of education' – remains the same. Since its foundation, the School and its old boys (called 'Old Sydneians') have played an important part in the history of this country.

The Act provides that the Governor of New South Wales should be the Visitor of the School, and that certain senior representatives of the Parliament and of the University of Sydney should be Trustees. In spite of this, Grammar is not under government or university control, nor is it associated with any of the churches. A socially comprehensive secular school, it takes boys of any race and of any religion, or of no religion. It is not dominated by boys from any one district, nor does any occupation predominate amongst the parents. It derives much of its strength from its central position in the city of Sydney; boys come here from all over the Sydney area.

Admissions and Scholarships

Many boys come to College Street from our two Preparatory Schools, but around one third of the boys in each Form come to us from other schools. Application must be made on the appropriate form to the Master of the Lower School. A non-refundable fee is paid at the time of application. Parents need to present their son for an entrance assessment and interview in the year preceding the proposed year of entry.

The main points of entry to the three schools are:

- (i) Preschool at St Ives
- (ii) Kindergarten at St Ives and Edgecliff
- (iii) Third Class at St Ives and Edgecliff
- (iv) Fifth Class at St Ives and Edgecliff
- (v) First Form (Year 7) at College Street.

Vacancies arise from time to time in other Forms at College Street; if you are interested in lodging an application you should check with the School.

Boys seeking admission to College Street must take the Entrance Assessment, unless they have attended one of the Preparatory Schools. A boy will be accepted from Sixth Class at St Ives and Edgecliff into Form I at College Street unless in the opinion of the Headmaster, in consultation with the Headmaster of the relevant

Preparatory School, it is thought that he is not likely to be able to cope with the academic standard at Sydney Grammar School.

Boys coming into Form I at College Street from other schools will complete the Entrance Assessment, as well as attending a morning of group activities and an interview. Selection will be based on a range of elements from these events. Further information is given on the application form.

Once a boy is in the School, promotion from year to year is dependent on satisfactory performance, attitude and conduct. This is especially important in the case of promotion into Form V (Year 11) at College Street.

The School offers a large number of scholarships to boys entering Form I. We also offer assistance with fees for boys whose parents would otherwise be unable to afford the fees, and we encourage applications for these. Details can be found on the School's website www.sydgram.nsw.edu.au



Structure of the School

The School is governed by a Board of Trustees, appointed in accordance with the terms set out in the Sydney Grammar School Act of 1854. The Trustees appoint the Headmaster, who is ultimately responsible to them for the management not only of the Senior School, but of the Preparatory Schools at Edgecliff and St Ives as well. In practice, the day-to-day management of the Preparatory Schools is in the hands of their respective Headmasters. The Headmaster is assisted by the Bursar, Senior Master and the Deputy Headmaster.

Here are some other people you will need to know:

Deputy Headmaster

The Deputy Headmaster is in charge of the House/Tutorial system which provides pastoral care and discipline for the boys in Forms II – VI (Years 8 – 12). Together with the Housemasters, the Deputy Headmaster manages contact between the School and parents on pastoral matters.

Deputy Headmaster (Academic)

The Deputy Headmaster (Academic) is responsible for the academic curriculum, the organisation of examinations, choices of subjects and the official entries of boys for the public examinations. The Deputy

Headmaster (Academic) coordinates the work of the Subject Masters across the academic departments within the School.

Deputy Headmaster (Academic Enrichment)

The Deputy Headmaster (Academic Enrichment) is responsible, among other things, for fostering avenues for intellectual curiosity and exploration within the School. This includes oversight of Academic Extension, where the School offers many formal and informal opportunities for boys to extend their interests beyond the confines of the curriculum.

Deputy Headmaster (Co-curricular)

The Deputy Headmaster (Co-curricular) is responsible for the co-ordination of School activities outside the classroom including, camps and study tours, Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, clubs and societies. The Deputy Headmaster (Co-curricular) works closely with the Sportsmaster, Director of Music, Co-ordinators of Debating and Chess and Commanding Officers of Cadets.





Master of the Lower School

The Master of the Lower School is in charge of admissions at College Street, and also looks after the boys when they arrive in Form I (Year 7). The Master of the Lower School interviews prospective pupils and is also available to those who wish to know more about the School.

Housemasters

Housemasters are responsible for the welfare of all the boys in their respective Houses. They oversee the work of individual tutors, ensure that parents are kept informed of problems as they arise, and organise social functions at which parents can meet other parents and their sons' tutors. Housemasters also have an important responsibility for discipline. Boys are looked after by the Master of the Lower School when they arrive and then enter one of eight Houses in Form II (Year 8)

Subject Masters

Academic departments are run by Subject Masters, who are responsible for the curriculum in their subject, and the teaching work done by their staff.

Tutors

Members of the teaching staff also act as tutors. Tutors are the primary points of contact between parents and the School. They look after a group of twelve boys and meet them every day. Once every ten days or so, they meet for a longer period during which an activity beyond the normal academic courses is undertaken.

Sportsmaster

Sport in the School is run by the Sportsmaster, who organizes games, allocates coaches, and oversees a wide range of matters from discipline and safety to the maintenance of equipment. Within each sport there is also a Director, or an Assistant Director, who is responsible for that sport's internal efficiency. The boatshed is run by the Master of the Boatshed, who is also responsible to the Sportsmaster.

School Counsellors

Three psychologists are available for boys with personal and emotional issues or those experiencing difficulty with their schoolwork. One counsellor also offers guidance in the choice of university courses and career options.

Academic Curriculum

The academic curriculum is organised around the ideals of a liberal education. This means that we do not teach vocational subjects but pursue instead a focus on more abstract, theoretical disciplines. Throughout a boy's life at Grammar, we insist that he pursue a range of academic studies and disciplines appropriate to his talents.

Questions regarding details of subject choices and the suitability of boys for particular courses are dealt with by the Deputy Headmaster (Academic).

Form I

All boys take English, Mathematics, Science, Latin, French, History, Geography, Art, Applied Arts, Music and Physical Education.

Form II

All boys take English, Mathematics, Science, Mandatory History, Mandatory Geography, Art, Applied Arts, Music and Physical Education and two electives. The elective subjects are Latin, Classical Greek, French, German, Italian, Chinese (Mandarin), History or Geography. (Elective History and Geography are additional to the mandatory courses.)

Form III

All boys take English, Mathematics, Science, Mandatory History, Mandatory Geography and Physical Education. Three electives are chosen from Latin, Classical Greek, Sanskrit, French, German, Italian, Chinese (Mandarin), History, Geography, Art, Applied Arts, Drama or Music.

Form IV

All boys take English, Mathematics, Science, Mandatory History, Mandatory Geography and Physical Education, and continue with their three electives from Form III.





Forms V & VI

In line with the School's requirements for breadth of study, all boys must study six subjects in Form V. In Form VI boys must study a minimum of four subjects, including at least two humanities subjects and at least one Mathematics or Science subject, totalling a minimum of twelve units. English is taken by all boys. In addition to English, HSC Courses are offered in Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Earth and Environmental Science, Latin, Classical Greek, French, German, Italian, Chinese (Continuers), Japanese for Beginners, Ancient History, Modern History, Geography, Economics, Visual Arts, Design & Technology, Drama, Music, PDHPE and Studies of Religion. All subjects offered are at 2 unit level with the exception of Studies of Religion (1 unit). One unit extension courses are available in English, Mathematics, Latin, Classical Greek, History, French, German, Italian, Chinese and Music. A second extension course is available in English and Mathematics making it possible to study four units of both of these subjects.

It should be noted that some combinations of subjects may not be available in a given year because of timetable and staffing constraints.

Academic Extension

There is an important distinction to be made between academic 'acceleration' and 'extension'. At Grammar we take the view that broadening and deepening a boy's understanding of a subject, through personal contact with a master who is an authority in the field, is preferable to acceleration through the curriculum.

Many classes at Grammar are streamed, and much extension work takes place in a normal classroom context. There are a range of co-curricular clubs which focus on a particular academic area. Grammar also participates in the Science, Mathematics, Informatics, and Geography Olympiad programmes.

Academic Support

A dedicated group of masters led by the Head of Academic Support provide targeted support for boys with a range of additional learning needs. This support takes place within and around the normal structures of the curriculum, rather than taking boys away from their normal classes, and there is a strong focus on organisation, planning and time management.

Further Curriculum

Visual Arts and Applied Arts

Visual and Applied Arts occupy a position of great importance. Art and design history are popular disciplines here and we take seriously the idea that boys must acquire a technical competence in skills such as drawing, perspective, and composition if they seek to progress in these subjects. Photography and ceramics are popular, as are various digital technologies in the creative realm. Each year we sponsor a professional Artist in Residence, who sets up a studio in the School and works alongside the boys.

Music

Music has long had a central place at Grammar. Many boys learn one, and often two instruments, and have opportunities to perform both in small ensembles and larger orchestras. The Music Department is very strong, both in terms of the quality of its teaching staff, and the quality of its facilities. We offer a number of music scholarships for outstanding performers.

Sport

Sport at Grammar is structured so as to support the School's liberal academic focus and not drive or influence it. Boys are expected to play a summer and winter sport and to treat their School team obligations as the priority. Year-round organised team coaching for one particular sport is not permitted, and the School strictly enforces limits on the amount of time allocated to training. The School has excellent facilities for sport. Most cricket, rugby, football and tennis games are played at Weigall, Grammar's grounds at Rushcutters Bay, which are about two kilometres east of the School. Swimming takes place at Cook and Phillip Park adjacent to the School. The boatshed, with full rowing facilities, is located at Gladesville. At College Street there is a large gymnasium and facilities for basketball, volleyball, rifle shooting and fencing. Buses are provided to take boys to and from training venues on weekdays.

And beyond...

Many boys choose to join the School's Army Cadet Corps, or the Air Force Cadets. Debating attracts a number of boys each year. Boys can join many special interest clubs including (and this is just a sample) chess, philosophy, creative writing, ceramics, drama, fly-fishing, film and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.





Finally...

Grammar is an unusual school. Its liberal curriculum sets it apart, as does its focus on the life of the mind. Examinations are important and we do value academic success, although we fully accept that boys mature at different rates, and that there are many indicators of success at school besides examinations. Parents sometimes feel obliged to give their sons extra coaching outside school, in order to give them a 'competitive edge'. Although it is not our business to instruct parents in the choices they make for their sons outside school, we do not approve of this. Boys need to be given some time to themselves. A childhood crammed with study is not a good one.

Life at Sydney Grammar School is busy, and the boys' days tend to be very full. Sport is compulsory until the end of Term III of Form V. Other activities are also compulsory, such as outdoor camps in Forms I and IV and community service in Form V. From early on, boys are encouraged to be self-sufficient, and take responsibility for what they do. Grammar is a remarkably friendly place and masters are always happy to help the boys manage their time.

If you would like to know more, the next step is to contact the Assistant to the Master of the Lower School. If you are interested in either of our Preparatory Schools at St Ives or Edgecliff, you should contact the relevant Headmaster. Details of how to contact these people may be found on the application form.



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