



CENTRAL COAST  
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

# BUNDARA

Magazine

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## STRONGER TOGETHER

Power of community shines through

NEW SCHOOL UNIFORM AND FAREWELL TO LONG TIME STAFF



BUNDARA is the biannual magazine of Central Coast Grammar School.

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We acknowledge the Darkinjung people, the Traditional Owners of the land in which the School is located. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to this country and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

## From the Board

This time last year I said that 2021 would offer its own challenges but that CCGS had the quality and depth to navigate the future with optimism. Little did I know how much further we'd be tested.

The leadership of our Headmaster and School Executive, and my fellow Board colleagues, has been robust and ambitious during another year of disruption. We have aimed high throughout, expected a lot of each other, and collaborated closely to secure the very best outcome for CCGS families. This has been reflected in every area of the School's operation and I'm delighted to see these qualities and skills coming through strongly in our next generation of Head Prefects and school leaders.

When I read about the strategy underpinning our shift to remote learning, I truly understand and appreciate the enormous effort our teachers have made to secure such strong academic and wellbeing outcomes for our children. I applaud their professionalism, grit and flexibility and congratulate all our staff, particularly our long serving retirees, on their service to CCGS. Of course, all this would come to nothing without your partnership at home, on the front line, making sure our children made the most of all opportunities provided.

We didn't freeze in the face of further lockdowns, but sustained our forward momentum, starting the year with the opening of wonderful new Junior and Senior facilities, and finishing it with the opening of a brand new uniform shop and a fresh new take on our school uniform for 2022. While our foundation traditions like the coin line continued to sustain us, new traditions like the House Music Festival were added to the mix.

Of course, none of this works unless we work together. The X factor that glues all our efforts together is the mutual trust and respect embedded in the DNA of our school culture, which is owned and shared by us all.

Once again, we conquered the pandemic challenges and have come back stronger than we have ever been. Looking forward, we are experiencing very high demand for positions at CCGS and the school is in a very strong position. With high levels of vaccination and the country opening up, we can look forward with cautious optimism to a new COVID-normal in 2022, heralding a return to many of the activities we have been missing.

Thank you to everyone who has played their part in our journey this year.

#### Stephen Brahams FAICD

Chairman of the School Board



## From the Headmaster

It's been a year of two halves. Triumphant resurgence after the pandemic challenges of 2020, with fabulous new (well ventilated!) Junior and Senior facilities, then resolutely battling the delta variant through lockdown before welcoming everyone back to school in October.

The longer period of remote learning this year has tested our strength and challenged our wellbeing, but we came through it together.

We have all had to learn to live with uncertainty. When and where we could travel, who could visit our homes, when vaccines would be available for different groups, when lockdown would end, when children could come back to school, whether the HSC would happen, when we might return to a new normal...

As we prepared to return to school, we had to adapt quickly to changes to school restrictions, gathering our COVID-management group at short notice to adjust our plans for COVID-safe operations, often on a daily basis. This uncertainty has been incredibly draining and has taken an emotional toll on us all. None more so than our Year 12 cohort, whose final school years and social lives have been so scrambled by

the pandemic. Year 12, we salute you.

Amongst all this uncertainty, what we can be certain of is our cohesive community, supporting each other, and growing ever stronger in the face of adversity. Students could rely on a warm welcome on Teams every lesson and inventive lessons that encouraged them to talk, engage and think. Families could rely on our wellbeing team, only a phone call away when they needed support. Teachers could be confident of the quality of our remote learning program and the technology supporting them. As Headmaster, I could be sure of the unwavering support and partnership of parents and carers, nurturing and motivating our young people during home learning. Everyone could count on meticulous planning for a safe, swift and sensitive return to school.

Much of this issue celebrates the way we have worked alongside you to keep quality learning going and keep children who were physically isolated connected. Your enthusiasm for getting involved in so many fun wellbeing activities, your child's education and your support will always be remembered. Thank you.

When so much seemed so uncertain, our CCGS family could rely on the culture and relationships we have built together to bring us through. As I write, I can't be certain of how the pandemic will play out in the school environment during the final weeks of Term 4. What I am certain of is that you are a remarkable group of people and this is a remarkable school with an exciting future ahead.

### **William Low**

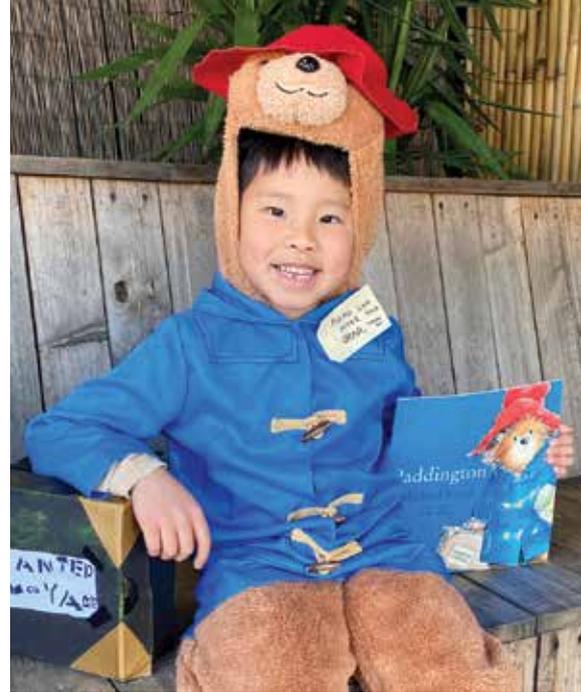
Headmaster/Chief Executive Officer

# Connecting Community

**CCGS Connect unites families, students and staff**



As COVID-19 restrictions forced a return to remote learning, the School sought out creative ways to bring students, families and staff together. CCGS Connect became a lively space for students to come together virtually and take part in fun activities and games.



### Nurturing our minds and bodies

From the bottom of our feet (our soles) to the centre of our hearts and minds (our souls), Sole to Soul Day was dedicated to nourishing our minds and bodies.

Junior School students and teachers grabbed their crazy socks, ready to support their own wellbeing and give back to others.

Junior School House Captains called on students to shout out to local businesses, send a letter to a loved one or write a message of support to a frontline worker. Students also had the opportunity to nurture their own soul. Teachers prepared a range of fun activities presented via video tutorials, like making a bird feeder with Mrs Hurley or pup cakes for our dog friends with Mr Lewer. It was a chance for everyone to give back to themselves and others with heart and soul.

### Wellness Wednesday

Choice, care and connection became themes for senior school students. Two Wellness Wednesdays during Term 3 encouraged the senior school to take time away from desks and screens, get outside in nature, exercise and make choices to support personal mental health and relaxation.

### CCGS Connect Trivia

Hosts Stevo (Mr Nathan Stephenson) and Millsie (Mr Keith Mills) hosted virtual trivia for students. Eager contestants from Years 7 to 10 pitted their knowledge against each other in action packed rounds of trivia-style questions. There were brain-busting teasers, linguistic teacher name scrambles and scavenger hunts.

### Book Week went virtual

We gathered our costumes and grabbed our favourite books to transport Junior and Middle School into a week of book celebration! Families raided the costume buckets and drawers. Everyone was inventive under lockdown, keeping costumes simple by using items around the house to create characters from their favourite stories. Pinocchio created his nose from a stick in the garden, characters from "Shh We Have a Plan" came to life using blue paper and textas, and a dressing gown provided the perfect cape for Darth Vader.

The Library team kept everyone entertained with competitions and games like Guess the Book in a Jar, daily book quizzes and book cover



guessing. Middle School students shared images of their favourite reading places and created artworks recognising the Book Week theme Old Worlds, New Worlds, Other Worlds. Old books were transformed into new and interesting items. The results were spectacular.

### Senior School Athletics

We kept the track and field spirit alive with our own virtual athletics,

## Connecting community continued:



lockdown style. We may have missed the traditional yearly athletics carnival but that didn't stop us from taking time to get active. Over two dedicated afternoons students were timetabled off class so they could go for a surf, a bike ride, kayak, jog or play soccer.

### Cheer on Charlie

Olympic fever took the School by storm. CCGS alumni Charlie Hunter (2014) represented Australia in the Men's 800m in Tokyo and CCGS was right behind him to cheer him on. Messages of support flooded the School website and social media.

Charlie made it through to the semi-finals on 1 August making Australian Olympic history as one of only three Aussies to get through to this competitive stage. In a strong and gallant effort, Charlie finished his semi-final race in just 1:46.73. CCGS students, staff and community are so incredibly proud of Charlie who gave it everything in a very tough race.

In the lead up to Charlie's Olympic journey, he sent a video message to students from the Olympic village in Tokyo. This was shown during a special Green and Gold virtual roll call. CCGS even received a special mention from Channel 7 just before Charlie's first race.

### Pets of CCGS

Our pets are so special to us - they provide us with a friend to play with, a companion to go out for a walk, they give us comfort and a good snuggle too.

We asked students and families to share their photos of learning from home with their pets, in an online gallery for everyone to view. Pets on Teams, pets in roll call, pets helping with homework. From budgies to cows, lizards to dogs, our special companions lifted our spirits, and connections were made. You can see the gallery on [ccgs.nsw.edu.au/ccgpspets](https://ccgs.nsw.edu.au/ccgpspets).



### House Music Festival

Performing is a huge part of our CCGS DNA. With musical productions either cancelled or postponed, it was time to think creatively of ways to sing and perform together. CCGS Houses went head to head this year in the first-ever House Music Festival! Whether you had just started learning or you were a seasoned music pro, there was a place for everyone to share their musical talents, ambitions and dreams.

Director of Instrumental Music, Mr Chris Hunt said, "We received 175 entries which was incredible. Everyone who entered is now part of our school history. Bravo!"

For all the details go to [ccgs.nsw.edu.au/musicfestival](https://ccgs.nsw.edu.au/musicfestival).





# Meet your new Head Prefects

**On the back of a challenging 2020/21, we chatted with new Head Prefects 2021/2022 Emma Parmeter and Loïc Mallet to discover their plans. They hope to bring positivity and cohesion to the School as role models, ready to lend a hand and be a friend to everyone.**

## **1. What does the position of Head Prefect mean to you?**

*Loïc:* To me being Head Prefect means that I've been given the honour to represent the students and the opportunity to genuinely make a positive change within our school community. I will strive to create an environment of cohesion and positivity that I hope will outlast my time here at CCGS.

*Emma:* Being awarded this position has been an extremely fulfilling and surreal experience as it means that I am now able to represent and give back to the school that welcomed me in with open arms back in Year 5, and has continued to support and care for me as I've grown into the person I am today.

## **2. What do you think makes a good role model?**

*Loïc:* A good role model leads by example; he or she is a leader not a boss and uses acquired knowledge and experience to aid, guide, inspire and mentor, instead of exerting a sense of command. A role model is someone I can look up to and turn to for guidance or advice no matter what the issue. It's someone who commits to having a balanced and unbiased viewpoint.

*Emma:* It may sound generic, but I honestly believe that a good role model is someone who 'walks the talk'. It is extremely easy for anyone to put forth ideas that sound amazing on paper; however, it takes a good role model to then put in the effort and dedication needed to see their ideas manifest into something greater than themselves.

## **3. How do you hope to serve the CCGS community?**

*Loïc:* Throughout the next year, I hope to serve the CCGS community by implementing new initiatives which create a stronger bond amongst the different cohorts. If each student can strengthen their support network of teachers, trusted adults and older and younger students it will be beneficial to everyone. I'll strive to ensure that all voices of my fellow classmates feel heard. I want to be a positive role model - someone who instills trust and conveys that it is not difficult to be a nice person.

*Emma:* I hope to serve the CCGS community by being a voice for all students from Kindergarten to Year 12, as our students are the heart of our school. This is an incredible privilege. I will be able to funnel my peers' ideas, thoughts, and desires into physical implementations and build upon our already wonderful community.

## **4. Looking forward to the end of Year 12 in 2022, how would you like to be remembered as Head Prefects?**

*Loïc:* After my departure from CCGS I would like to be remembered as the Head Prefect that anyone from any year group could come to no matter what the issue. I want to be the person that was always ready to lend a hand to others and get involved within the community. As much as I'd love to be remembered as a positive leader and a role model, my primary goal is to be remembered as a friend in the best possible way, to all students here at CCGS.

*Emma:* My primary goal is to be known and remembered as the girl that was there - there at every carnival, there in every amazing co-curricular opportunity, there at every school event, and there for anyone and everyone who needed me. I'll strive to be a voice for the students that make CCGS the incredible school that it is.

# Out and About

## WHAT'S COOKING?



The home kitchen became the science lab for National Science Week. Students explored chemical reactions including thermal decomposition (making honeycomb) and gelatinization and retrogradation (rice cooking). They used food items to make models of pathogens like viruses, bacteria and fungi – including our friend the coronavirus.



## COMMUNITY CONNECT

The P&F launched a new Business Directory to support CCGS families to promote their business within the school community. Open to School families only, the trial directory is available in the Community Section of MyCCGS.

## A tradition continues



Marking 36 years since the foundation of CCGS, students added coins to the annual Foundation Day Coin Line and raised over \$1500 for Save the Children Foundation.



## Farewell Class of 2021

Every CCGS student, teacher and staff member came out to celebrate and farewell the Class of 2021.

In a parade that snaked its way from the Senior College and through the Junior School, Y12 made their way up to the Performing Arts Centre for the very last time for Leavers Service.

We wish them every success, good health and happiness as they embark on new adventures.





## STEPPING UP



Isaac Charlesworth, Year 2, has cerebral palsy but that didn't stop him from stepping up for Cerebral Palsy Alliance's Steptember campaign. Each day through the month of September Isaac completed 10,000 steps. He raised a lot of awareness and donations too, smashing his fundraising goal. Well done Isaac.

## Guess the Teacher

A cool interactive quiz shared amusing baby and toddler photos of teachers. There were pigtails, mucky faces and interesting fashion choices! Thank you to our victims ... uh sorry ... we mean teachers ... who took us back in time and gave us a giggle.



Pictured top to bottom: Mrs Naomi Riley, Mr Bill Low and Mrs Sandra Peebles.

## THE DEBATE GOES ON AND THIS TIME IT'S VIRTUAL



COVID-19 didn't silence our Year 10 debating team. They took part in the Australian Disputes Centre debating competition via Zoom, with an unusual twist seeing each team made up of students from different Sydney schools working together.

Congratulations to Joan Han-Park, Jacob Ramirez, Jasmine Hunter, Catherine Purcell and Annabelle King. Long live the debate!



## The CCGS drive-through!

Hundreds of Junior School families collected devices and resources from the RLC – drive through style. It was a safe and super-efficient solution to get set up for home learning.

## COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Year 11 students Ruby Ko and Emma Parmeter participated in the Max Potential Leadership program through Gosford RSL.



Both Ruby's Cab2Connect and Emma's Heart to Heart projects focused on building community connections. Congratulations to both students for their innovation and passion to serve those around them.



## VIRTUAL TOUR GOES LIVE

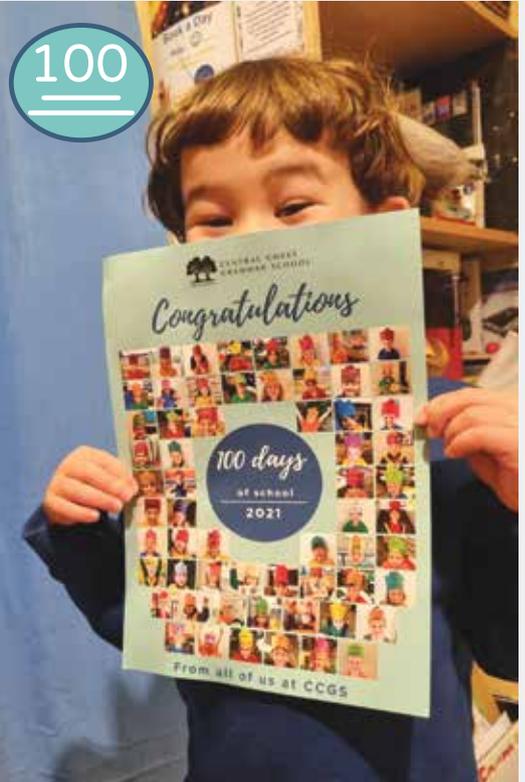
Lights, camera, action. The start of 2021 saw film crews on campus creating video footage and 360 panoramic views for a new interactive virtual tour. Now live on [ccgs.nsw.edu.au](http://ccgs.nsw.edu.au), families looking to join the CCGS community can virtually visit the School and explore learning spaces, playgrounds, sports fields and more.



### Circle Time and Floating Bubbles



We were 'bubbling' with excitement to see each other again in person when school returned in Week 4, Term 4. Years 7 to 9 reconnected with friends and teachers during special circle times, designed to encourage positive interactions and respectful relationships. Students took turns to share, listen and connect with each other before waving their wands and covering the skyline with bubbles.



## 100 Days of Kindy

Kindergarten teachers held an online 100 Days of School party. Every student was sent a fun party pack in the mail including a hat to decorate and wear on the day, and a Race to 100 game to play with their families. After the party a special poster was sent home showing all their smiling faces so those learning at home could look up and see all their friends.

## CCGS ranked by Better Education Group

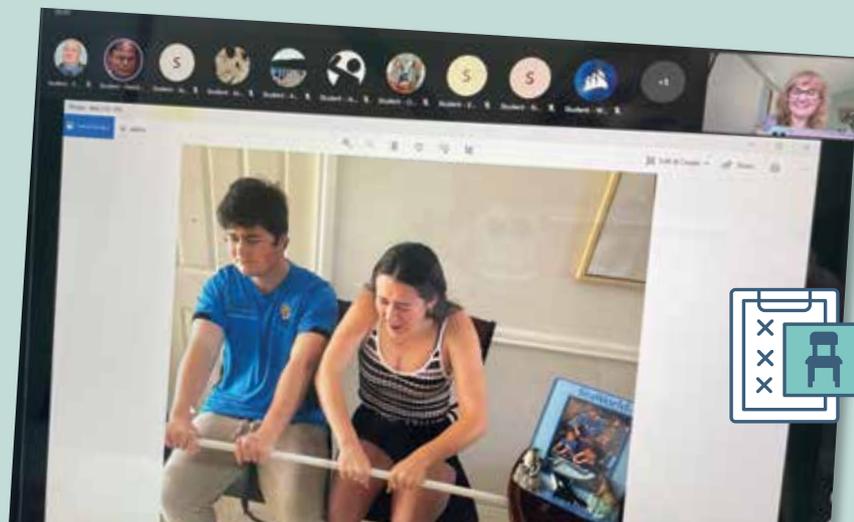
An online report by the Better Education Group on the academic performance of NSW schools saw CCGS in the Top 100. Our Junior School received 97/100 and was ranked 56. The senior school received a mark of 99/100 and was ranked 65. Congratulations to students and staff on an amazing achievement.



## Self-efficacy, Hope, Gratitude and Connectedness



These were the themes explored by Junior School students in Term 4. Over four weeks students were led through a series of wellbeing exercises to help them feel safe, confident and encourage strong, healthy friendships. Yoga, planting seeds of Hope in silly face cups, teacher-student dance offs, and gratitude scavenger hunts were just some of the activities to help nurture and support young minds.



## Year 12 go on a hunt

To help mark the end of schooling, Senior College House Coordinators ran a virtual scavenger hunt. Students enjoyed working in teams to track down household items and recreate old family photos.

## COUNT IT. CHALLENGE.



School Houses and staff went head to head to see who would be crowned the School's hot stepper in the inaugural Count.It Challenge. We connected our devices to track movement and together clocked up 6,573,900 steps in two weeks! That's just over 5,000kms. Congratulations to Y12 Anna Battersby, Y11 Anya Paszkowski (pictured) and Y9 Taylah Mikkelsen who were the top student steppers. Well done to Mrs Mel Amoroso, Mrs Catherine Lawrance (pictured) and Mrs Alison Pope-Moore who put their best foot forward for the staff team.

## Supporting those in need



Year 6 found creative ways to raise money for FoodBank NSW & ACT - a charity committed to helping families struggling to buy food. From lemonade and bookstalls to physical challenges and selling homemade dog treats, the cohort raised over \$2500.



# Shifting to remote learning

We learned a lot in 2020. We learned how to quickly pivot from face to face teaching to remote learning. We learned the critical importance of connection and establishing virtual touchpoints. We learned to look in different ways for signs of whether students were struggling or flourishing. We learned creativity and independence as we changed the way we approached life and education. And we learned how important it is to breathe.

Then 2021 threw a new curveball our way. Although school looked and felt a bit different, CCGS students, families and staff continued to be supported with all the resources and effort the school could bring to bear.

Syllabus content and valuable real-world skills of independence, remote collaboration and connection, self-direction, resilience and communication became paramount.

## Supported, independent learners

“The effort staff put into teaching and nurturing students across the School during remote learning was incredible,” said Mrs Rita Boys-Smith, Acting Head of Junior School. “Lessons were interesting, out of the box and a high quality. Breakout rooms for students with additional learning needs were warmly welcomed by families and helped ensure that no student was left behind. Targeted intervention, one-on-one support and focused group programs helped keep students on track and engaged.”

## Streamline and focus

“Maintaining learning and syllabus coverage was key during remote learning,” explained Mr Damon Cooper, Director of Teaching and Learning. “We streamlined our approach and adjusted tasks, so we could focus on the core skills and understanding of each subject area. Students received direct explicit instruction in syllabus content. They were given the chance to develop their understanding through discussion and by asking questions in their MS Teams classroom. Small group work in break-out rooms, and independent activities were completed through our online learning platform, MyCCGS.”

“This was about streamlining learning processes, changing our instruction, and integrating technology and resources in new and creative ways to support learning.”

## Evaluating learning

Mrs Janine Comber, Leader - Senior College said, “Assessment and the ongoing monitoring of tasks, projects and assignments is an essential part of our framework to support learning development and identify opportunities for extension or support.”

“During remote learning, HSC and other formal assessment tasks were comprehensively redesigned to evaluate learning, ensure validity and reliability in the virtual environment, and prepare students for HSC examinations.”



### Wellbeing was central

Mrs Jackie Lynch, Leader – Middle School said, “We know student wellbeing is key to everything we do. Without individual wellbeing, learning outcomes are less likely to be achieved. While we couldn’t see students face to face, teachers tracked engagement online through MyCCGS. Roll call and regular check-ins became the virtual frontline, as well as phone calls with families.”

“Keeping students connected in fun and innovative ways was critical. Creating a real sense of belonging is fundamental to wellbeing. We wanted students to know that they were not alone, that they are part of a community, valued, special and cared for. CCGS Connect and other wellbeing initiatives like Book Week and the Virtual Athletics Carnival provided a springboard for fun, relaxation and connection.”

### Together we are stronger

“The partnership between school and family gained significant momentum during remote learning. And never was this partnership more important,” explained Mr Steven Bennett, Deputy Headmaster.

“Families worked hard at home to support the learning and wellbeing of their children at the same time as managing their own jobs and households, plus the emotional challenges that lockdown brings. Open lines of communication and staying connected to support children’s learning were paramount and we were truly grateful for this partnership. This was a team effort - a close and valued partnership between the School and families to achieve the best outcomes for our children.”

“The strength of our community has always been central to the identity of Central Coast Grammar School and we are very deliberate in the way we build and support these connections. We stood together throughout the challenges of remote learning and have come back stronger than we have ever been.”

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### From the start of remote learning to midnight on Monday 18 October:



• **38,972** classes and meetings were held on Teams



• **441** academic class groups on Teams and 162 student groups for roll call and wellbeing (Roll Call, House Family, Junior School pods, music groups)



• **517,649** logins to MyCCGS by students, staff and parents by 2,997 people in our community



• **27,062** submissions of student work to MyCCGS



# New year, new look

School uniform plays an important role in creating a sense of identity and pride among students and the community.

Following a comprehensive design and development phase, a new academic uniform has been created for students in K to 9. The 2022 new school year will see Junior and Middle School students start wearing the new designs. K to 12 sport uniform and 10 to 12 academic uniform is unchanged.

The CCGS uniform has evolved over the 36 years since the School's foundation in 1985. Our goal was to review the overall look of the uniform and the needs of students and families in today's learning environment.

Jane Parker, a co-founder of Country Road Australia, has created fresh, light, memorable designs that reflect the best of our traditions. The natural environment of our campus and our location on the Central Coast were the inspiration for the designs. Core elements create a distinctive and refined visual identity for our students. Mix and match pieces are trans-seasonal, making the uniform more practical as seasons change, with more choice for students.

P&F President Lana King said, "As a past student myself I think it is a lovely fresh take on our original uniform. The family of uniforms grows with the child - from play based minis to playful youths and growing teens."

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CCGS has partnered with Midford School Uniforms to manufacture and retail all uniform items moving forward. A new uniform shop has been opened on the site of the old Year 12 study. Staff are ready to welcome you in-store to explore the new uniform. You can book a fitting appointment and order all K to 12 uniform items online.

Visit the MyCCGS School Uniform page at [my.ccggs.nsw.edu.au](https://my.ccggs.nsw.edu.au) for further information.



Mix and match pieces are trans-seasonal, making the uniform more practical as seasons change.



## A look back in time

Over the past three decades the uniform has undergone small and often subtle changes including the affectionately named “tea cosy” making way for broad brimmed hats, a separate uniform and colour palette for Years 10 to 12, and in recent years the introduction of shorts and trousers for girls.





# Farewell to long time staff

The end of the year sees the retirement of four long-serving CCGS staff members.

We asked Jim McAtamney (PDHPE - 1986), John Worthing (Technology - 1994), Phil Knox (Science - 1995) and Gill Martin (Library - 1998) to reflect on their careers at CCGS and share some of the lessons they have learned along the way.

## You've been at CCGS since 1986 Jim and 1998 Gill. In your opinion what has changed the most in teaching and what remains the same?

**Jim:** When I started in 1986 it was the start of a fledgling school. There were two staff in the PE department - Bob Lloyd and myself. Who would have thought I'd still be here in 2021, 35 years and over half my life later! In the early years, we were charged with the task of developing what were to be the traditions, policies and procedures that would be the foundations for the school we have today. Traditions like House Family, K-12 carnivals, and staff K-12 all operating together, knowing each other and their families. In the early days, our major carnivals were always K-12. Swimming at Gosford Olympic pool, Cross Country at Paul Oval and Athletics at Adcock Park. They were great days and the school community was really behind us.

I vividly remember the endless staff meetings in the early days. We would discuss every student at the school. As specialist teachers we taught all classes and saw the students grow through infants, prep and senior school, building great relationships over many years. As the School has grown, this partnership between teacher and student

has remained the basis for successful academic, social and emotional growth.

Another significant milestone for the PDHPE department was the addition of the RLC sports hall and later the synthetic multi-purpose sports field. The school community raised funds for these facilities and that was a real highlight. I am now teaching the children of the students from those early days.

I consider myself the luckiest person in the world to have worked with CCGS staff for 35 years. It's been an honour and a privilege to have worked with such a talented and professional group of teachers over the years.

**Gill:** In the Library teaching world, the ever-increasing emergence of new digital technologies has been the biggest change. Teacher Librarians have always guided students on the best research skills but had to quickly adapt to the way students researched once the world of information became available at their fingertips. Now we make sure they are not drowning in information and know how to find authorised and credible sources - it's quite a minefield for them.

There was always talk that books would die out, but they have not! They are loved more than ever, and students continue to enjoy borrowing as much as they did when I first started working at CCGS.

### **What has been the highlight of your CCGS days?**

**John:** Helping the School develop the Technology Department and then moving into the new ARTECH building stand out for me. Previously our workshop was in a really old wooden demountable, just where the new Junior School is today. Moving everything from the workshop into the new ARTECH building with two large, well equipped and modern workshops was fantastic.

**Gill:** Coming to work and seeing students patiently waiting outside the glass doors of the Library in the morning and the smiles they give as we open up for the day. It is a real treat to see students excited about coming into the Library as the Library staff work so hard to make it a vibrant, stimulating and welcoming environment that reflects our importance as a teaching and learning hub. Being able to interact with students and staff across all year levels and subject areas has been a unique and privileged part of my work. No two days have ever been the same, and the lovely conversations with our happy, thankful students and dedicated staff have kept me constantly motivated to manage the Library in the best possible way. I have worked in all types of Libraries since I left school and have loved being immersed in the wonderful world of literature, but CCGS has been my favourite.

### **What's one lesson you've learned from your students?**

**Phil:** There are so many student lessons that have osmotically become part of my teaching habits. Many years ago, I realised that some of the best lessons were when we left the classroom, leaving the formal lesson plan at the door. Letting the students take the lead has resulted in collaborative learning experiences that have been of mutual benefit.

**Jim:** Every student is different. It's easy to pick the student who absolutely loves PE. It's the highlight of their week. While other students tolerate the subject but like the teacher, my job is to tap into all students and find what excites them. When the students see that you have a genuine interest in them this helps break down some of the barriers.

### **What do you think are the most important skills students learn from school today and why?**

**John:** For our department it's all about life skills – knowing how to use the workshop equipment, sewing machines and key cooking skills. These are important life skills that the students pick up and something

that they will value for the rest of their lives - whether that's cooking a meal at university, fixing something that is broken, or DIY when they have a home of their own.

**Phil:** Students are generally inquisitive, social beings who continually question and test boundaries. To successfully navigate these natural characteristics, they must develop the social skills that allow them to work collaboratively and happily with others. They also need to become critical thinkers who question and seek evidence-based truths. This is especially relevant in this current climate where social, visual and print media are full of misinformation that denigrates the supporting scientific evidence. Science has provided society with so many medical and technological advancements, yet so many doubt the overwhelming evidence supporting the science of climate change and vaccines.

### **What does the 'next chapter' hold for you?**

**Jim:** Who knows what is around the corner? The last 12 months have been very different. Who would have thought I would conclude my teaching career, with a worldwide pandemic! Next year every day will be productive. Family, health, fitness and friends have always been important parts of my life, nothing will change. There will be a huge gap to fill post-CCGS, but I won't be short of things to do!

**John:** I am hoping to travel and am looking at doing the lap around Australia, however I also have a grandchild on the way so I may need to be closer to home to fulfil my babysitting duties to begin with. We have a van and have practiced a couple of long trips so hopefully we will explore and enjoy a relaxed camping lifestyle.

**Phil:** Other than the occasional casual teaching day, there are many old and new roads to be travelled and plenty of home projects to complete. Hopefully, it will also be a time of continued personal growth.

**Gill:** Well, it has always been my plan to travel overseas with my husband and live back in England where I was born for a while. COVID-19 put the brakes on that for all of us but I look forward to still doing that soon. Not being able to travel far has allowed me to spend more time with my family. I realise now that I need to be able to keep doing this as my parents are in their 90s and I have a lovely granddaughter and a grandson on the way. I'm looking forward to spending quality time with them.

I'm an avid reader so I look forward to having the time to read more. There are so many talented authors and I will be able to escape into all their glorious stories – bliss!!

To read their full interviews head to [ccgs.nsw.edu.au/news](https://ccgs.nsw.edu.au/news).

## **Congratulations and farewell to Jim, John, Phil and Gill.**



**Jim McAtamney - 36 years**



**John Worthing- 28 years**



**Phil Knox - 27 years**



**Gill Martin - 23 years**



“Sunny will be a special friend to all and we’re excited to see the positive outcomes her presence will bring.”



# A ray of sunshine

Back in May, towards the end of Semester 1, we introduced Sunny, the latest member of our CCGS family. She had just about found her way around when many of her new friends went into remote learning.

She was seen out and about on campus during lockdown and loved being one of our ‘Pets of CCGS,’ but like many of us she also ‘worked from home,’ with daily training sessions.

Sunny is showing great promise. And the children are being fantastic as well! They stay seated on their chairs and wait patiently for Sunny to come and see them.

Sunny is an Australian Cobberdog with a friendly and loving temperament. She has a low shedding coat, making her hypo allergenic.

Over the past few years, growing research has seen an increase in the implementation of animals, such as dogs, in education and care settings.

Mr William Low, Headmaster, “We believe a dog can help enhance wellbeing across the campus. Sunny will be a special friend to all and we’re excited to see the positive outcomes her presence will bring.”

You can follow Sunny on Instagram or Facebook for more updates.



Sunny was very excited to welcome everyone back onsite in Term 4 and has resumed her wellbeing work across the school, making special guest appearances to the delight of everyone, spreading smiles, love and happiness.

She has been helping everyone with empathy, kindness, self-confidence, communication and anxiety, and can be found spending time in the classrooms and outside to help her settle fully into the different environments, smells and noises.

## CCGS ALUMNI



### PETA SKILBECK (1996)

Peta wanted to be a doctor from a very young age. At CCGS she extended this desire by taking subjects that would further develop this path – Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics and English.

A love of the idea of pregnancy and birth, coupled with her own experiences with infertility, encouraged her passion, and she now has her own private practice in obstetrics and gynaecology, Intuition Private, helping many Central Coast families bring new life into the world.

“It is a role with immense rewards but it affects my lifestyle to a huge degree,” said Peta. “I’m able to be present and available 24/7 when on call because of my passion for supporting women’s health and also because of the amazing backing of the personal and professional network behind me – including my husband, children, and their grandparents who are also on-call 24/7.”

### CAMERON BARNETT (2019)

During his time at CCGS, Cameron participated in our exchange program, travelling to Japan in Year 11 to our sister school, Ueda Nishi, and hosting three students over the years from the same school.

These experiences, combined with studying Japanese from Year 8 through to HSC extension level, inspired a love for Japan, its people and culture.

Upon finishing Year 12, Cameron headed to Japan for a once in a lifetime opportunity to teach English at Ueda Nishi School. In the face of a global pandemic Cameron found unique teaching opportunities and the chance to develop deeper friendships.

Since returning, Cameron has started an International Studies course at Macquarie University, furthering his knowledge of Japanese language and culture.



### ALUMNI NEWS

Want to be in the know with the latest alumni news? Visit the news page at [ccgs.nsw.edu.au](https://ccgs.nsw.edu.au) for more alumni stories. If you’re a CCGS alumni contact Jacqui Raadsma at [alumni@ccgs.nsw.edu.au](mailto:alumni@ccgs.nsw.edu.au) to share your alumni news. You can also visit our alumni page at [ccgs.nsw.edu.au](https://ccgs.nsw.edu.au) to update your details and sign up for our alumni newsletter.

### IN MEMORIAM - AARON BYRNES

(1987 TO 2021)

CCGS alumni, Aaron Byrnes (2005), sadly passed away in August of this year. Aaron will be remembered as a fun loving, witty and vibrant young man. We extend our deepest sympathies to Aaron’s family.



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