

Bundara

MAGAZINE
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Our character in action

Living and
learning with wisdom
and purpose





CENTRAL COAST
GRAMMAR SCHOOL






BUNDARA is the biannual magazine of
Central Coast Grammar School.

Editorial Team

Catherine Fleming
Carla Silvestri
Tessa Little
Libby Meadows

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We acknowledge the Darkinjung people, the custodians of the land on which we live and learn. We pay respect to Elders past and present, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our community. We recognise that they are the custodians of a culture and a practical wisdom grounded in history, lore and Country.

From the Board



As I prepare to step down from my role as Chairman of the Board at Central Coast Grammar School, I find myself reflecting with deep gratitude on the journey we have shared as a School community.

Serving in this position has been a meaningful chapter in my life, not only as a leader, but as someone who is profoundly connected to the values and spirit that define this remarkable institution.

Over the past 15 years, I have proudly worked with my fellow Board Members, leadership team, our families and wider community to strengthen both the academic foundation and the broader character of the School.

Among the milestones I am most proud of are the upgrades to many of our key facilities, including our Performing Arts Centre (PAC), Senior College and Junior School.

It was also meaningful to guide the School during its 40-year celebrations in 2025, where we honoured four decades of shaping lives, building futures, and cultivating a community of learners who exemplify good character and practical wisdom.

These achievements are not mine alone; indeed, they are the result of a collective effort from our dedicated Board, passionate staff, engaged parents, supportive alumni, and remarkable students.

What has always set this School apart is its sense of community, and I have continually been inspired by our shared commitment to excellence and integrity. I carry a sense of pride in having contributed to its journey.

As I hand over the responsibilities to my successor, I do so with full confidence in the School's continued growth and success.

Thank you for the trust, support, and partnership you have extended to me during my tenure.

Stephen Brahams FAICD
Chairman of the School Board

From the Headmaster



Character education is fundamental for human and societal flourishing, and as parents, educators and community members, it is our responsibility to support our young people in developing the positive dispositions that shape our decisions, inform our motivations, and guide our conduct.

In this edition of *Bundara*, we are sharing a selection of the many examples of character work in action.

These lived examples tell the story of the ways in which we work to achieve excellence in all areas, with a School environment that proactively fosters good character and practical wisdom.

In looking to the next horizon of Central Coast Grammar School, I must pay tribute to the ambitious and aspirational vision of all those who have shaped what this fabulous School looks like today.

In particular, I recognise the work of our outgoing Chairman, Mr Stephen Brahams, whose personable and approachable manner has long been valued by our parents, staff and wider School community.

Stephen has served on and led our School Board for 15 years with distinction and selflessness. Across his tenure, his thoughtful leadership has been instrumental in shaping the School's strategic direction, and his guidance has ensured that we remain steadfast in our mission, values, and long-term vision for future generations of students.

Stephen has contributed strongly to an ambitious and highly successful range of infrastructure enhancements as a leader, Building Committee member, fundraiser and donor.

Just some of the highlights of his time include the development of the renewed Performing Arts Centre (PAC), award-winning Junior School and new Senior College precinct.

These facilities were intentionally designed to support excellence in education and align with leading-edge technologies and practices, and Stephen's 40-year experience in commercial property development ensured all projects were delivered on time and on budget.

When the COVID pandemic posed unprecedented challenges to our usual ways of learning and living, his robust, empathetic and proactive leadership also steered the School with a steady hand.

On behalf of the whole School community, I thank Stephen for his service to Central Coast Grammar School.

Phil O'Regan
Headmaster

GOOD CHARACTER AND PRACTICAL WISDOM

CHARACTER DIMENSIONS



CHARACTER STRENGTHS

Critical Thinking
Creativity
Communication

Respect
Integrity
Gratitude

Citizenship
Collaboration
Kindness

Courage
Resilience
Self-Awareness

STUDENTS WHO LIVE WELL AND LEARN WELL

Living Well and Learning Well at School and Beyond

Nurturing Good Character and Practical Wisdom in Our Students

Phil O'Regan, Headmaster

At Central Coast Grammar School, we know that good education is not simply about acquiring knowledge and skills; it is about shaping our minds and character so that we may live lives of meaning and contribution.

The purpose of education is inseparable from the purpose of life itself, and at its heart, education is a pathway to what Aristotle called *eudaimonia*: a life lived fully, wisely, and well.

This philosophy is at the heart of our vision, and our School takes a holistic approach that empowers every student to succeed in all areas of their personhood: academic endeavors, co-curricular pursuits, social relationships, and their sense of self.

Central to our new Strategic Plan 2026 - 2030 is the idea that good character is the foundation of how our students relate to others and engage with the world. It includes intellectual, moral and civic dimensions, alongside 'performance character' – the resilience and determination to act on one's values.

Earlier this year, before their first Year 8 English assessment, our students Poppy and Anu identified that some of their peers were having a hard time understanding Shakespearean language. They responded by spending time with them in the Library to share what they knew – a gentle demonstration of kindness, and a moment in which they helped to deepen the critical thinking skills of others.

If our character provides this moral compass, our practical wisdom is the ability to use it in action. Our Strategic Plan 2026 - 2030 describes it as 'the moral will and skill to choose well', or the capacity to make thoughtful decisions in real-world situations.

Throughout their schooling journey, our students are given ongoing opportunities to practise decision-making through authentic experiences – whether in

leadership roles, through community service, or in their co-curricular activities.

At this year's ANZAC Day Service, our Drill Squad mounted a catafalque party to honour the service of veterans and current service men and women in our community.

The Squad, formed as an initiative of students who had the courage to propose a bold new idea, is student-led and trained, and includes students involved in the Australian Air Force and Army Cadet programs, the Rural Fire Service, and leadership within our School.

Our Drill Squad is now supported as a co-curricular activity, making citizenship, service and respect visible to our whole community.

These moments – driven by the good character of our students – don't happen by accident. While each example rises organically from a moment of character in action, we intentionally shape programs and opportunities that nurture the character and wisdom of our students.

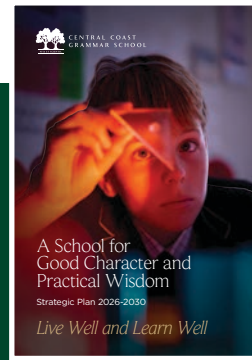
In Year 6, for example, every student builds a relationship with a buddy from Kindergarten, and in doing so, they learn about the importance of kindness and inclusion.

Our Year 6 Friendship Ninjas also lead with these same character strengths on the playground, making sure that every child has someone to sit with and play with, and no one is left out.

In Year 8, our students are explicitly taught citizenship in practice as they explore the way their words and actions can advocate for those who are displaced, disempowered or de-voiced, and see how they can do what they can to make the world a little better, safer or kinder.

Ultimately, our goal is to produce not only academic high achievers, but graduates who can contribute meaningfully and holistically to society. For our students, it's these lived experiences and real-time choices that shape who they are and who they will become.

Therein, our vision truly comes to life: young people who live and learn well, and are equipped not just with knowledge, but with the character and wisdom to know how to use it well.



READ OUR
2026-2030
STRATEGIC PLAN





A Space to Grow, Train and Achieve

A major addition to our School campus is already making an impact, with our upgraded Strength and Conditioning Centre now available to be used by students.

Made possible through the generous support of the Parents & Friends Association, the fully equipped Centre is located inside the Richard Lornie Centre (RLC) and is designed to cater for students of all fitness levels.

The facility provides access to high-quality equipment in a safe and structured environment, where we can help our students to build healthy habits, and support the development of our high-performing athletes – without them needing to leave the School grounds.

The professional standard of the facility is clear, with new commercial rubber flooring and thoughtfully organised training zones that support a wide variety of workouts.

Strength training is a major focus, with six power racks (squat and bench cages) forming the centrepiece of the space.

Supporting this are six Olympic bars and three trap bars, providing flexibility for different skill levels, and three rowers and three ski ergs for cardiovascular and conditioning work.

Head of Basketball and Strength and Conditioning, Mr Kurt Hayward, noted that the Centre has been designed to benefit as wide a range of students as possible.

“For those looking to improve their general health and wellbeing, the Centre provides an accessible and welcoming space.

“Regular exercise has been shown to improve mental wellbeing, focus and resilience, which will support our students both in and out of the classroom.”

“At the same time, the facility offers significant advantages for those involved in competitive sport. With access to high-quality strength and conditioning equipment, our School’s elite and aspiring athletes can also now train more consistently and effectively,” Mr Hayward said.



Excite, Enrich, Challenge

Bright Young Minds Come Together for da Vinci Decathlon

Our students showcased outstanding problem-solving and collaboration as part of the 2026 NSW da Vinci Decathlon, with our exceptional Year 7 team being crowned the State Champions.

Designed to test and stimulate the minds of school students from Years 5 to 10, the da Vinci Decathlon is a multidisciplinary challenge that pushes students beyond textbooks, blending logic with creativity, science with art, and teamwork with sharp individual thinking.

Our School was buzzing with ideas, intellect and friendly competition as we hosted nearly 300 students from local and regional schools in the Richard Lornie Centre (RLC) for our region's event.

Competing in teams of eight, the students tested their mental mettle across 10 disciplines: engineering, mathematics, code breaking, art and poetry, science, English, ideation, creative producers, cartography and legacy.

Students were enthralled by challenges that asked them to explore how time is measured, how it influences the world around us, and how it shapes the way we think and create.

Our students enjoyed the many opportunities to develop and practice their civic, intellectual and performance character, with event organisers noting the strong levels of engagement and sportsmanship from our students throughout the day.

Director of Learning and Studies Years 7-9 and convenor of the event, Ms Naomi Riley, said hosting the Central Coast region's da Vinci Decathlon provided a unique opportunity for our students to engage in creative problem-solving, while also being both challenged and inspired.

“The Decathlon allows our students to represent the School in an intellectual arena and to strive for excellence at the highest academic level. For me, as a teacher, it is particularly special because it gives students the chance to shine alongside their peers.

“The Decathlon celebrates teamwork, curiosity, and a shared passion for learning, and I am immensely proud of the achievements of our students at this event,” Ms Riley said.

At the awards ceremony held at the conclusion of the day, our Year 9 team emerged as the overall winners for their division, and were also recognised for their strong

performances across all individual disciplines.

Our teams then moved on to the prestigious da Vinci Decathlon State Finals at Knox Grammar School, with our Year 7 team – Sonny, Max, Lucas, Felix, Eleanor, Kaito, Eamon and Jasmine – ultimately being named as the 2026 New South Wales State Champions for their division.

Competing against 157 high-performing teams, this remarkable achievement reflects not only their academic strength, but also their ability to think critically, apply knowledge creatively and practically, and collaborate under pressure.

In addition, it is a testament to the dedication and expertise of our staff, whose collective efforts have supported these students to achieve at the highest level.

Our Years 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10 teams also represented the School strongly, and a special mention goes to our Year 10 team, who showed great camaraderie and ultimately won the event's Kindness Award.

Our Year 7 team: the 2026 New South Wales da Vinci Decathlon State Champions



Overall winners in the Central Coast region Year 9 division, with Director of Learning and Studies Years 7-9 and convener of the event, Ms Naomi Riley



Artists' impressions by Space Design Architects

Where Creativity Takes Shape

Inside Our Bold New Arts Precinct

An exciting new chapter in excellence in arts education is unfolding, with the construction of our purpose-built Arts Precinct designed to inspire creativity, collaboration, and expression across every year level.

The project, which has been designed by the award-winning Space Design Architects and constructed by COWYN Building Group, will feature six dedicated art classrooms, each thoughtfully designed to support distinct disciplines and techniques.

The building is comprised of four Senior and two Junior art spaces, with associated breakout spaces, storage, circulation, amenities, and landscaped gardens.

Observed from the covered deck and external courtyard, the School's kiln is celebrated and placed as the centrepiece of the Precinct.

The building form has been orientated to connect with the existing flow paths of the campus, and features high-level glazing to optimise light and mitigate glare on student work zones.

This exciting new Arts Precinct represents an investment in the creative potential of every student, and we're excited to see how they'll make their mark once the facility officially opens later this year.



Future Ready

New STEM Opportunities Set to Inspire Students

In response to growing interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), a new wave of co-curricular programs is set to open doors to deeper exploration and innovation for our students.

The unique STEM offering will introduce a range of hands-on programs aimed at inspiring the next generation of innovators, and equip students with practical skills that will push their thinking beyond the classroom.

Offered from Kindergarten to Year 12, the STEM co-curricular program will be structured around five key pillars, with a clear progression of skills and complexity specifically designed for each year level:

- **Science, Design and Engineering:** Biomedical, design, AI and innovation
- **Aerospace, Drones and Flight:** Aerodynamics, flight simulation, and aerial mapping
- **Robotics:** Coding, mechatronics, and design challenges
- **Future Transport and Vehicles:** Electric, solar, and hybrid design
- **Environment and Sustainability:** Marine ecology, recycling, and renewable resources

This whole-school STEM model integrates curriculum, co-curricular and industry partnerships, and provides authentic, hands-on learning opportunities for students that are grounded in real-world contexts.

Head of Science, Ms Hannah Sherer, says the expansion reflects both student demand and the increasing importance of STEM pathways in higher education and future careers.

“The program has been designed to provide students with opportunities to think beyond the traditional classroom and engage in authentic problem solving.

“These experiences help students see STEM not simply as a blend of subjects, but as an opportunity for solving

meaningful problems in the world around them,” Ms Sherer said.

Head of Technology, Ms Kate Sonter, noted that students can often become hesitant to take risks because they were worried about getting things wrong.

“The focus behind the program is also helping students become comfortable with challenge, uncertainty and failure.

“We want to intentionally shift that mindset by creating environments in which testing ideas, making mistakes, and refining solutions is seen as an essential part of learning.

“Through this program, we hope students develop not only technical skills, but also resilience, curiosity, and the confidence to tackle complex problems with creativity and courage,” Ms Sonter said.

Each pillar will culminate in a competition or challenge that allows students to showcase the skills they have built over time, and Year 12 STEM Portfolio Captain Olivia says the program will act as a great entry point into real-life challenges and thinking for students.

“As cultural anthropologist and author Margaret Mead said, ‘Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has’.

“These words have always stuck with me, and STEM is where we stop looking for safe answers and start looking for meaningful ones.

“This is exactly what the new STEM co-curricular program seeks to foster. It covers so many flavours of STEM, and speaks to so many interests, and I highly encourage students to get involved and take advantage of these amazing new opportunities,” Olivia said.



Growing Character Through Action

Year 6 Students Leading with Purpose

Character education is most powerful when students are given authentic opportunities to contribute meaningfully to their community.

Since the introduction of Leadership Portfolios in our Junior School last year, our Year 6 students have been given many chances to step into genuine responsibility and translate service, leadership and empathy into everyday practice.

Under the stewardship of teacher Mr David O'Farrell, our Innovation and STEM Portfolio Leaders have begun offering in-class tech support to help younger year groups navigate new applications and digital tools. Whether they're assisting to troubleshoot issues or build confidence using new software, these Year 6 leaders are learning the importance of patience, communication and service.

The group will also undertake technical audiovisual training with the School's Audio-Visual Technician, Mr Ben Collier, to assist in the running of assemblies, developing valuable behind-the-scenes skills and a strong sense of responsibility.

Environmental stewardship has been a focus for the Sustainability Portfolio, supported by teacher Mrs Natalie Kell.

Recently, students delivered an engaging and interactive presentation to Kindergarten students about sorting rubbish correctly and caring for the environment. Through peer education and hands-on leadership, these students are learning how small actions can positively influence others.

The Student Voice Portfolio has taken a storytelling approach, with students involved in the student-led newspaper currently immersed in writing, editing and designing the next edition.

Guided by Ms Sacha Webster, the process has become an exercise in curiosity and collaboration, with students shaping ideas and developing critical thinking for external audiences.

For students in the Service and Social Justice Portfolio, help often happens in the middle of the playground. Supported by teacher Mrs Megan Sproats, the Friendship Ninjas initiative equips Year 6 students to support younger peers as they navigate what the students themselves call 'friendship fires'.

By helping their younger peers remain in the 'green zone', these student leaders are modelling empathy, emotional regulation and respectful relationships.

Working in pairs, students from the Community and Culture Portfolio, supported by Ms Sacha Webster, also lead visiting families on tours of the School. For many, it will be the first time they are asked to represent the School in such a visible way, and is an opportunity to reflect not only on where they learn, but how they contribute to the culture of the community around them.

Supporting this collaborative portfolio structure is the weekly Prep Meet Up program, led by Director of Wellbeing K-6, Mrs Sarah Beasant. The sessions have quickly become a valuable point of connection across the different portfolio groups, giving students a clearer sense that their individual contributions form part of something larger.





Sun-Smart Leadership

Head Girl Makes Sunscreen More Accessible

A simple addition to our playground is quietly supporting the good health of our students, thanks to the imagination and initiative of a student who saw a problem and stepped up to solve it.

Our Head Girl Charlotte has embarked on a personal mission to challenge ‘tan culture’ and make sun safety simpler and more accessible.

Living in a country where UV levels regularly rank among the highest in the world, the risks of sun exposure are well-known, but in the busy school day, sunscreen can still be an afterthought for students.

Charlotte decided to take proactive action by advocating for the installation of an easily accessible, automatic sunscreen dispenser in the playground, positioned where students naturally gather.

The goal was simple: removing the barriers that made sun protection inconvenient, and making it easier for her fellow students to make a healthy, sun-smart choice.

The new sunscreen dispenser is now able to be accessed by all students from Kindergarten to Year 12, helping to prevent skin cancer and encourage lifelong healthy habits.

“Sun safety and preventing skin cancer is something I’ve been really passionate about for many years, and being in the role of Head Prefect, I’ve had the platform to bring in something like this dispenser.

“At the beginning of my term, I came up with the idea as a really smart, easy and practical way for kids around the School to have access to sunscreen at lunch and recess,” Charlotte said.

Our teachers have noticed an uptake in students utilising the dispenser before Sport lessons, and in particular, our younger year groups have embraced it with enthusiasm.

“It’s been really inspiring to see young children come up to use it and ask me about it. I hope that – when my time as Head Prefect comes to an end – this initiative thrives on in the School community, and that sun safety is still really prominent,” Charlotte added.



Year 3 student Sasha at the Junior School Cross Country

Junior School Students Explore Every Way to Shine

Being Humble in Victory and Gracious in Defeat

In 2026, the Junior School's Theme of the Year is 'Every Way to Shine' – exploring the idea that every single person has a unique way to shine, and that all of them matter.

Whether it's by trying something new, being thoughtful and kind, playing fair, or working to improve a certain skill, there have been no shortage of examples from our Junior School.

In particular, our youngest learners have been exploring what it means to be a good sport even when their parents and teachers are not watching.

Reflecting on these messages, they are reminded that at the heart of our School is the notion that good character is about finding the moral and virtuous way to act – no matter the situation.

One such story emerged from this year's Junior School Cross Country, where Year 3 student Sasha, a promising athlete, was set to run her race with focus and determination.

Midway through the course, she noticed another runner had fallen. The student was very upset, and without hesitation, Sasha stopped, encouraged her, and stayed by her side until help arrived.

Impressively, Sasha still finished the race in fourth place, but far more importantly, she chose kindness over competition at a time when very few people were watching.

Strengths such as competitiveness, confidence, and determination are most powerful when they are guided by good judgement and care for others, and in this sense, being a good sport means holding ambition and humility together, and striving to do your best while remaining respectful, kind, and fair.



Mamma Mia... Here We Go Again!

Students Dazzle in Senior School Production

On the eve of a wedding, love, laughter and mystery all collided when we said: Mamma Mia, here we go again!

With contributions from more than 100 students across the production, and lead by Charlotte, Lara, Emiko, Lily, Fergus, Elliot, Jonathan, Sam, Sonny, Blake, Aaliya, Ryiah and Oliver in our lead roles, this year's Senior School production of *Mamma Mia! The Musical* was a true celebration.

Packed full of the ABBA hits we all know and love, the show featured incredible performances from our cast members, and an expertly performed soundtrack that had attendees dancing down the aisles of the Performing Arts Centre.

The production itself holds a special place in our School's history: having previously been scheduled to be staged in 2021 but sadly shelved due to the pandemic, it was incredibly meaningful for staff and performers alike to be able to bring the show back to life.

In a full circle moment, student Sam – who was set to be part of the original cast when he was in Year 7 – was finally able to take to the stage as a Year 12 student in a leading role.

The production also marked the final school performance for our talented Year 12 student Charlotte, for whom this role has long been a dream.

Head of Drama, Ms Cate Whittle, praised the students involved for their enthusiasm and excitement, as well as the tireless passion and dedication of the staff members who ensured the production could flourish.

"It takes an enormous team to bring a show of this scale to life, and every contribution is deeply appreciated.

"A special acknowledgement goes to Mr Peter Corkill, whose dedication and commitment as Musical Director made working alongside him both a joy and a privilege.

"I'd also like to thank Mrs Larissa Koch for her dynamic choreography, Mrs Narelle Evans for her outstanding vocal leadership, and Mrs Meg Owen, who ensured every student looked and felt incredible on stage."

The show's Saturday evening performance was a particular highlight, with food trucks and themed dress-ups adding extra fun and flair to the event.

In an innovative move, the Production Crew also embedded a Character Code into their work on this year's production, with a set of guiding principles established to help them grow their civic and performance character, and work together even more effectively and respectfully.

The Heart of Our Library

Ms Catherine Lawrance Receives Prestigious SLANSW Library Professional Award



As our Library Technician, Ms Catherine Lawrance is a mentor and community builder whose influence reaches every corner of the School, and her dedication led to her recently being named the winner of the School Library Association of New South Wales' 'Library Professional Award' for 2026.

This prestigious award seeks to recognise individuals who embody excellence in their field, and through Ms Lawrance's leadership, mentorship, and unwavering dedication, she has enriched the educational experience of countless students and ensured the Library remains a central pillar of our School community.

Ms Lawrance's impact begins with her ability to see potential in others, especially in younger students. Four years ago, she founded the Library Leaders program – an initiative that has since become a cornerstone of student life in Years 5 and 6.

What started as an opportunity for students to assist with daily Library operations has evolved into a dynamic leadership experience. Under Ms Lawrance's guidance, students learn the intricacies of library systems – including shelving, cataloguing and resource organisation – while also developing confidence and responsibility.

Ms Lawrance's influence does not stop there: for Senior College students undertaking major works in extension subjects, she is an indispensable guide.

These students face the challenge of navigating complex research projects that demand both academic rigour and independent thinking, and Ms Lawrance meets that challenge with expertise and empathy.

Head of Library and Information Services, Ms Leah Rose, said Ms Lawrance is an exceptional library professional whose impact has been profound and long-lasting.

"Whether she is curating resources, developing programs, or collaborating with staff to enhance teaching and learning, Ms Lawrance approaches every aspect of her role with initiative, creativity and professionalism.

"Her leadership, generosity, and unwavering commitment to our students has enriched the lives of many, and strengthened the Library as a dynamic, inclusive learning space.

"It is a pleasure to recognise and celebrate Ms Lawrance as she receives this award," Ms Rose said.

Alumni Profile

Phoebe Britten



As the 2022 Dux, Phoebe Britten's path after school has been shaped by ambition, gratitude, and a deep belief in the transformative power of opportunity.

In 2025, at just 21 years of age, Phoebe was named in the *Forbes* '30 Under 30' list for her work reshaping access to tertiary education for disadvantaged young Australians; a remarkable achievement for someone also studying a law degree.

Phoebe is studying law at the University of Sydney and has founded a not for profit – Inspire Tomorrow Education – that is changing the educational landscape for students facing a range of challenges.

Phoebe was intent on doing law from Year 10 onwards, but the competitiveness of the degree entry meant the goal felt distant at times. She credits her teachers with helping her believe it was possible.

“

I had so many wonderful teachers who backed my decision to do law. Having people in my corner who genuinely believed in my ability to take that step, even when I wasn't sure I could, was really special.

”

For Phoebe, the idea for Inspire Tomorrow Education arrived suddenly. In her very first law lecture, she was sat in a theatre with students from across Australia and around the world. A former High Court Justice, known for his advocacy for public education, asked the cohort to raise their hand if they went to a public school.

“In a room of 400 people, maybe 12 to 14 hands went up,” Phoebe recalls. “It's one thing to see that statistic on paper. It's another thing to see it in person.”

She thought about her own educational journey and the opportunities she had, the teachers who invested in her, and the reality that many young people never receive that chance early in life.

“My ethos has always been that we lift as we climb. If I'm able to access social mobility, then I see it as my responsibility to give those transformative opportunities back to others.”

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Alumni Profile

Madeleine Swan



With a Master of Music and a Master of Speech Pathology, Madeleine Swan has carved a special niche that combines two of the things she loves most – and it's a passion that all started during her time at school.

A mainstay of the Central Coast Grammar School Music program, Madeleine now runs her own private clinic, Voiced. Health, and specialises in voice care and singing voice rehabilitation.

What are your strongest memories of music at School?

It really was the centre of my time there. The overseas music tours stand out, and in particular, Europe in 2004, when I was in Year 7 and played the bassoon, and the Canada/USA choir tour in 2006.

Playing Sarah Brown in the Senior School production of *Guys and Dolls* was another enormous highlight, as was singing in the big band and the choirs.

Even the smaller moments, like musical items at assembly, are some of my fondest memories. Music was essentially my before-and-after-school care.

How did your background in music influence your decision to specialise in the singing voice?

Speech pathology is a huge field. Most people picture us working with young children on speech sounds or stutters, but there's a wonderfully niche corner of the profession focused on the voice and upper airway.

I work alongside ear, nose and throat specialists, particularly laryngologists, to assess and treat voice and breathing disorders, and I've taken it a step further by specialising in singers and professional voice users: people recovering from vocal fold injuries or surgery, theatre performers, actors, and everyday voice users like teachers.

Holding a Master of Music alongside my speech pathology training means I can work in the space between clinician and vocal coach, which is rare in the field, and it's the part of my work I love most.

What advice would you give to our current students who are passionate about music?

Take every opportunity. Learn as many instruments as you can manage, join as many groups as your timetable allows, and throw yourself into every School production. This is a golden time when musical opportunity is right at your feet, so make the most of it, and enjoy it.

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CENTRAL COAST
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Arundel Road, Erina Heights NSW 2260, Australia

T +61 2 4367 6766

W ccgs.nsw.edu.au **E** info@ccgs.nsw.edu.au

ABN 85 002 839 607