



bring out her **best**

**STRATHCONA**



## strathcona girls achieve **their best**

This vision statement encapsulates our purpose at Strathcona - to encourage our girls to embrace their education wholeheartedly ... to see them emerge as confident young adults with optimism and insight.

“Bring out her best” is a sentiment that has defined Strathcona since it began teaching girls more than 85 years ago. Located in Melbourne’s inner Eastern suburbs, Strathcona is a unique, medium-sized school with three separate campuses catering for girls and boys in ELC and girls from Prep to Year 12.

Strathcona offers a rich education to nurture students intellectually, spiritually, physically, socially and emotionally. We foster the girls’ creativity and innovation, seek to strengthen their self-esteem and resilience and encourage a sense of responsibility to self and others. A supportive pastoral care program, extensive co-curricular opportunities, first-class facilities, resources and technologies underpin our broad academic curriculum. Inspirational teaching is informed by the latest research in education to ensure that each girl has every opportunity to realise her potential.

I invite you to take a walk through any Strathcona campus to experience a tangible, warm sense of belonging and community. This is a place in which the girls can be totally comfortable, where they can feel happy and safe in an intimate, family-orientated environment. It is the perfect environment for your daughter to gain the confidence and self-belief she needs to explore her world.

Welcome to Strathcona!

Helen Hughes

Principal

# to instil a sense of **wonder** and excitement

Our teachers often remark that they are fortunate to have a vocation that allows them to share in the excitement of discovery that is learning. The spirit of teamwork that exists between student and teacher is genuine. Our teachers are in tune with each child's potential in order to bring out his or her best. Such a partnership is only possible because of our commitment to small class sizes - another key factor in the success of Strathcona over the years.

The Early Learning Centre programs cater for 3 and 4 year old sessional groups and full-time Pre-Prep groups. These programs aim to instil a sense of excitement and wonder about the world, giving the children the courage to explore, investigate and experiment.

Our commitment is to bring together the children, their families and the School in a cooperative and supportive partnership, working towards fulfilment and growth. Parents are a vital and continuing influence and are their child's first teachers. By sharing in the knowledge of the child's background and past experiences, we are able to provide a program that is both meaningful and respectful of each child's individuality.

A well-balanced program is offered encompassing all areas of early childhood development. The teacher is a facilitator of the children's exploration; listening and

guiding them in their own learning. Our practices are influenced by Howard Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences and the philosophy of Reggio Emilia. The ELC program is organised to meet the needs of the children by providing a variety of stimulating materials and activities together with interesting and exciting child-initiated projects.

Play is vital to the development of the growing child, providing endless opportunities to practise life skills, develop thinking and representational skills and make sense of the world through investigation, exploration and role-play. Convergent thinking skills are developed through task-oriented play materials and divergent thinking is developed through open-ended play.



# a firm **foundation** for learning

The building blocks of knowledge are provided in the Junior School years: skilled and passionate staff inspire and develop inquisitiveness and curiosity to enable students to build new knowledge and understandings of the wider world. Within a supportive and challenging environment, each student has the opportunity to develop a strong sense of belonging and purpose. The lively curriculum embraces diversity and facilitates the development of key foundation skills in literacy and numeracy, personal spirit and citizenship.

The Junior School, opened in 2005, is just a few minutes walk from the Main Campus in Canterbury. It offers our Prep to Year 6 students innovative facilities yet retains the family style environment that was a strong feature of the original school. Student learning experiences are enhanced by our state-of-the-art campus, specifically designed to meet the requirements of primary aged students. Light-filled classrooms offer flexible learning spaces, access to outdoor learning areas, reading nooks and the latest in information technology. Our outstanding specialist facilities include a library, curriculum extension areas, art studio, multi-purpose activity room, music room and individual music studios for instrumental lessons.

The dynamics of a small class ensure that we can assess individual differences in abilities and learning styles. With a very clear understanding of each girl's academic potential, we are able to cater for her specific needs throughout her school life. An integrated, structured approach to the teaching of literacy and numeracy and a wide range of specialist programs provide a firm foundation for learning at the secondary level. The transition to Year 7 is a significant stage for all our girls - a very exciting time when new friends are made and new challenges are faced.



# developing **positive** attitudes and a strong sense of self

The Middle Years at Strathcona offer a broad academic program, supportive pastoral care and a wide range of co-curricular opportunities. Our priorities are to ensure that each girl makes a smooth and confident transition into her secondary school years and that she lays the foundations for future success. Challenge and rich learning experiences, developing positive attitudes, resilience and a strong sense of self are the hallmarks of this important stage in each student's educational journey.

While the foundations of discipline-based learning are laid in a comprehensive core curriculum, it is recognised that choice is an important motivator for adolescents. It is equally important for them to make connections with their changing world. The SEED Program (Seek, Engage, Enrich, Diversify) currently runs once a week for most weeks of each term. Students choose from a range of options, and then spend eight weeks exploring the topic through cooperative groups. Explicit teaching of Information Communications Technology, information literacy and thinking skills is an essential part of the program. Students have the option of presenting their work in a number of ways, including performance and online publishing. SEED offers the possibility of groups combining students from Years 7 and 8.



# space to grow and explore their world

Year 9 is a time of maturing intellectually, socially and emotionally, striving for greater independence and a clearer understanding of personal identity. It is a year when 14 and 15 year olds need space to explore their world and grow as individuals. Strathcona recognises this special year by having a separate non-residential campus, which provides a rich and challenging experience for the Year 9 students. When the girls enter Year 9 and move to our Hawthorn campus for the unique, whole-year Tay Creggan experience, independent inquiry in project-based learning is emphasised through the I-Learning Program (Interdisciplinary, Interactive Inquiry), as is a focus on mobile technologies.

State-of-the-art facilities include spacious classrooms, science facilities, a large, light-filled art room, an independent learning centre and a commercial kitchen. The Yarra River at our doorstep provides an environment for challenging water activities such as canoeing, kayaking and rowing.

The close proximity of the main school campus enables Year 9 girls to continue their participation in inter-school sport, choirs and instrumental ensembles. A core group of staff works continuously at Tay Creggan and specialist teaching staff, including individual instrumental staff, travel to Tay Creggan to provide the girls with the expertise required at this stage of their education.



# academic excellence will remain a focus at strathcona

Strathcona's proven academic program assists the development of the thinker in every girl. Curiosity and a desire for truth are vital ingredients in developing deeper understandings that go beyond the classroom, supported by mobile technologies and new media. Beyond critical thinking, the girls engage in diverse creative thinking experiences through problem solving, developing arguments, presenting research, producing works of art and performing.

On returning to the senior campus in Year 10, following their unique experience at Tay Creggan, the girls continue to develop their abilities as creative and critical thinkers with an additional focus on skills for the workplace and life beyond school. The girls continue to be supported in their senior years across a wide range of subjects by dedicated staff. The Senior Centre and Information Resource Centre also contribute to their success, as does strong wireless connectivity throughout the School to support modern technologies. The effectiveness of our academic program is evident in the exceptional results our VCE students achieve each year.



# a community of **active** learners

The Advanced Learning Centre's vision is to provide and support personalised learning for all students as well as the wider School community. All are encouraged to be active learners, empowered by knowing and understanding their unique learning profiles and recognising the importance of being engaged in the wider community. Research continues to expand our understanding of brain development and informs our teaching practices, which value the importance of continued questioning, experimentation, reflection and evaluation.

ALC support is provided in different forms. For students, assistance may be provided through regular timetabled classes, individual sessions and internal and external workshops, including those offered through the Boroondara Gifted Network. Teachers have access to formal professional development sessions as well as specialist resources for brain-based learning, differentiation, learning support and extension. Parents have access to professional development sessions, information via Blackboard and School Newsletters, and individual consultations.

In a world in which the ability to access and use information effectively is a keystone of rich engagement with learning, the Strathcona Information Resource

Centre is committed to developing the skills of lifelong learning and informed decision making. Our three libraries - Senior School, Tay Creggan and Mellor House - work to provide resources, services and environments that are responsive to the range of needs of students from ELC to Year 12 and of all staff.

The SIRC incorporates a comprehensive print, audio visual and digital collection. A particular focus on access to local and global information via online databases and e-books means that students have the opportunity to locate and process data anywhere and at any time. With its flexible learning spaces, all with connectivity to the wireless network by portable devices, the SIRC is able to accommodate both collaborative and personal learning activities.

An essential part of our curriculum is our information literacy program, empowering our students to be assured practitioners in the construction of knowledge and understanding. The SIRC is a knowledge exchange at both the concrete and symbolic heart of learning in the School.





environments that  
nurture learning –  
our **magical** riverside  
campus



# to foster **creativity** and innovation

At Strathcona, we recognise that the arts embrace an increasingly diverse field. The opportunities for individual and group performance emerge through our comprehensive Arts program, which brings out the creative potential of each girl. Our Creative and Performing Arts Centre provides the students with four art rooms, a multimedia laboratory and recording studio, music and drama facilities (including a performance area) and a food technology facility.

Drama plays a significant part in each girl's journey at Strathcona. Every year we have a major drama production and throughout the year there are student-developed House Drama competitions and year level concerts in the Junior School. Dance festivals, soirées and musicals are further exciting opportunities in which the students can participate.

Musical opportunities are also varied. In the music program, students can explore a range of musical styles and can create their own digital compositions. Individual tuition is available in a wide variety of instruments and there are orchestras and choirs that unite larger groups in both the Junior and Senior Schools. Jazz, Chamber, Concert and Brass ensembles and bands are just some of the options available.

All students have the opportunity, facilities and resources to explore an extensive variety of artistic forms. Our art programs build essential skills and knowledge, allowing each girl to explore through the mediums of design, ceramics, textiles, painting, drawing and computer-based art.

Our girls have the opportunity to develop their artistic talents and creativity ... to excel in dramatic challenges, develop their musical talents and much more. From dance, drama and music to debating, photography, art and multimedia production, our girls have the opportunity to become well-rounded, creative and confident individuals.



# technology facilitates deep learning

Strathcona is a technologically rich environment. Information and communications technology is fully integrated across the curriculum. Our learning management system, Blackboard, allows for online delivery of classroom programs, while its Web 2.0 features enable students to construct their learning through the use of secure blogs, wikis and journals. Parents and alumni also have the opportunity to participate in the Strathcona community via this portal.

Computer nodes, sets of laptops and iPads provide staff and students with the flexibility to work individually or collaboratively, in the classroom or outside, online or offline. However, technology is not an end in itself. Rather, it provides the tools to enable students to observe and collect data, research information, share understandings, co-construct meaning, create and present. Subjects specifically focused on ICT skills include Digital Music Technology, Digital Video Production and Multimedia.

A custom designed multimedia and recording studio, featuring state-of-the-art hardware and software, supports the latest in creative use of technology, such as digital video production and podcasting. Strathcona also has its own television network called STV, which provides parents, students and staff with access to a regular news service about the School and a forum for displaying quality samples of student work.

Our technology infrastructure provides our students with industry standard computing environments (Windows and Mac), preparing them for workforce best practice. High speed wired and wireless networks throughout all areas of the School, including full coverage throughout knowledge exchange locations, support real-world learning experiences - anywhere, anytime.

Committed to keeping abreast of change and innovation, Strathcona plans the continual development of these resources, ensuring the provision of an up-to-date, reliable infrastructure to support evolving curriculum needs. As leaders in this field of education, Strathcona staff present regularly at local and national conferences and host tours and professional development sessions for teachers from other schools.



# we encourage students to put no limits on what they can **achieve**

Strathcona girls enjoy a wide variety of outdoor and indoor experiences to keep their minds and bodies fit and active. From organised team and individual sports to strenuous outdoor challenges, the choice is rich and diverse.

The unique character and location of the campuses allow us to offer true diversity in this regard. Strathcona students enjoy a wide range of intra-school and inter-school sports. Sports include aerobics, athletics, badminton, basketball, cricket, cycling, diving, swimming, hockey, netball, rhythmic gymnastics, skiing, softball, tennis, volleyball, water polo and weight-lifting. Additionally, kayaking, canoeing and rowing are special opportunities that take place on the Yarra River, which flows past our Tay Creggan Year 9 campus in Hawthorn.

The Compass Program (Years 5 to 8) and The Duke of Edinburgh's Awards Program (Years 9 to 12) provide students with a range of challenging, non-competitive, voluntary activities that encourage personal growth, enterprise and a broad range of life skills. These programs are made possible through a combination of the extensive school facilities across the three campuses, external sporting venues and community facilities.

Regular camps throughout the year also complement the academic program, providing diversity in student

learning. Typical camp activities include horse riding, canoeing, abseiling, raft building, archery, initiative activities, team rescue and decathlon. Junior camps include overnight stays and adventure trips to the beach or bush, as well as visits to Sovereign Hill and Canberra. Our senior girls have the opportunity to undertake cross-country skiing at Falls Creek and experience the beauty of Australia's centre on trips to Kakadu and Alice Springs.

At Strathcona, the emphasis is on co-operation, challenge, team spirit and simply having fun together.



# guiding our girls to be resilient, confident and **compassionate**

Maintaining the wellbeing of our students is a primary aim at Strathcona. This is developed and encouraged within a climate where students, staff and families respect the rights and values of others. Strathcona is proud of its reputation as a caring and nurturing school.

Pastoral care is very much a team approach, with many layers of support for the girls. Staff encourage and support students to grow and develop in all areas of their lives – physical, social, intellectual, emotional and spiritual – to become caring and responsible members of the community.

The Pastoral Care program is designed to develop resilience in our students, to encourage the girls to participate, become part of a team and take on leadership roles. Ultimately, it is about valuing and respecting each student ... nurturing her confidence and giving her a strong sense of belonging.

With our range of cross-age programs, Strathcona is an extension of the home environment, developing links with girls in other year levels. Girls are given exciting choices, encouraged to take on challenges and provided with a support network to ensure that any concerns they may have are resolved quickly. Such care gives them every chance of success.

Throughout her school years, each Strathcona student is monitored to assess her specific needs. Charting the progress of the girls is more than a means of assessing academic development; it is our way of ensuring that the personality and character of each girl come to the fore. To achieve this, we rely on a talented team led by the Dean of Students. Year Coordinators, Form Tutors, our School Psychologist and our Chaplain are constantly in touch with the ebb and flow of school life to monitor student wellbeing.

Our commitment to pastoral care and wellbeing underlies all our programs, our curriculum and co-curricular activities. Success in life is not just about giving the students the confidence to achieve academically; it is about each girl developing her emotional intelligence – her resilience, her confidence and her compassion for others.



# a caring **community** that recognises the needs of others

We are proud of the fact that our students revel in their spirit of citizenship. Our girls have a strong sense of social responsibility, which is founded on their compassion and understanding of others.

Strathcona students have always displayed a keen interest and strong participation in both the local and wider community. The School's Christian commitment is the foundation of the involvement of the girls in programs that reach out to the community, inspiring in each the spirit and willingness to become an active citizen.

Christian Education at Strathcona is taught from Prep to Year 12 and has always guided the personal and spiritual development of our students. We conduct worship assemblies and chapel services and also offer a Liberal Studies program to Year 12 students. Guest speakers are invited to raise awareness of issues involving the community.

A key thread throughout much of our curriculum is that of the democratic ideal. Students are encouraged to debate what it means to live in society as engaged and principled citizens. The values of respect, tolerance and social justice underpin all our social service activities. Strathcona plays a key role in the Building Bridges program ([www.buildingbridges.org.au](http://www.buildingbridges.org.au)), which involves senior students from a wide range of Christian, Jewish and Islamic schools.

As contributors, Strathcona students genuinely believe that they can make a difference ... and they do. They also love taking up the challenge of raising money for various charities and for local and international humanitarian projects. Care of the environment is another important focus through horticulture activities in Year 9 and the Green Team in our Junior School.

We believe it is important to create a culture of care and social responsibility - a community that recognises the needs of others.



# a learning journey that is virtually without limits

Today more than ever before, we interact with a global community. Embracing the possibilities is important in the development of all our girls to ensure that they are informed, inspired and connected.

Twenty-first century teaching and learning bring the wider world into the classroom and the classroom into the wider world. The internet, with its ever-expanding opportunities for local, national and international interactivity and collaboration, is a vital tool in broadening and enriching the educational experiences of our students. Mobile technologies, supported by wireless connectivity for easy access throughout the School, allow anywhere, anytime access to information while, at the same time, students are educated in the safe and responsible use of these new media.

As our traditional classrooms transform into more flexible, collaborative spaces, linked to both the near and far environments, learning connects more and more with the wider community and real-world issues. To investigate critically issues of global significance, to understand diversity and different perspectives, to be adaptable, to communicate effectively with diverse audiences, to act imaginatively, ethically and innovatively - these are the competencies that will enable our students to live and work in a global environment.

The acquisition of such knowledge, skills and dispositions also informs our extensive program of student exchanges and tours. In addition to interstate opportunities, Strathcona students experience life in a number of countries around the world, including New Zealand, China, France, Italy, USA and South Africa. Service opportunities are also offered in locations such as Vietnam, Cambodia and indigenous communities. These opportunities are complemented by the chance for other Strathcona students to host international visitors from a variety of countries and especially from our sister schools, Soshin Girls' School in Yokohama, Japan and Ewha Girls' High School in Seoul, Korea. Such experiences build greater intercultural understanding and engender the confidence and curiosity in the girls to embrace and explore their world.



bring out her best.

**STRATHCONA**

**Main Campus:** Senior/Middle School & ELC,  
34 Scott Street, Canterbury

**Year 9 Campus:** Tay Creggan,  
30 Yarra Street, Hawthorn

**Junior Campus:** Mellor House – Prep to Yr 6,  
173 Prospect Hill Road, Canterbury

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