



The Southern Star

Southern Cross Grammar

Mr Andrew Ponsford
Principal

Student Progress Interviews

Providing specific feedback that supports growth and improvement is arguably the most important academic activity a teacher can undertake with a student and their parents and carers.

Whenever asked, I always encourage staff to nominate 'two student strengths worth continuing' and 'one feature for the student to start doing'.

Identifying strengths and then enhancing those strengths even further is frequently a highly successful way to improve overall performance.

Did you depart your interview knowing how to improve? If you did, then you participated in a successful interview. This is the responsibility of all involved in the interview process—teacher, parents and student.

Year 8 Ski Camp to Mt Buller

My very best wishes to our Year 8 students and attending staff Mr Joseph Hedditch, Ms Lauren Hedditch, Mr Liam Ogden, Ms Jade Panozzo, Ms Judith Gowdy and Ms Taylor Moss, for this new camp initiative happening next week.

A fresh fall of snow in the mountains has been timely, and from previous experiences at other schools, I know our students will have a wonderful time. I am very envious!

Introducing our students to diverse outdoor skills and experiences is an important component of our program, as is fostering an enjoyment of the outdoors and an appreciation of Australia's unique landscapes.

Have a great time, everyone!

Ms Louisa Rennie
Deputy Principal and Head of Senior School (10-12)

Spotlight on Sharna Bahl

In 2012, Sharna Bahl became a Year 6 student at SCG.

A highlight for Sharna in that year was the graduation ceremony to celebrate her last year in primary school.

This was a memorable event for her, as she was finally able to take her learning to another level.

The biggest highlight throughout her secondary school years has been the Senior School Formal Dinner. This year in particular was significant, as the Formal Dinner was one of the last social gatherings with her cohort before graduation.

Sharna is enjoying Psychology—it is one of her highest-achieving subjects, in which she maintains a consistently high average. The content she learns will be beneficial for her future, especially when heading into university.

She works best in study groups where she can actively communicate with her peers. Sharna finds it challenging to balance the course work content of subjects like Maths Methods and Psychology, and she is always striving to do her best in that regard.

She is interested in following a Business and Law pathway, and is hoping to gain placement at the University of Melbourne or RMIT. In the months ahead, Sharna is focused on her upcoming exams, as it will decide whether she gets into the course she desires.

*Artwork created in NGL Day workshop
'Contemporary Aboriginal Painting'*



She remains confident about her ATAR, and is determined and committed to do her best so she can complete Year 12 in a positive way.

We are keen to see Sharna achieve her best and we wish her well in the months ahead!



Sharna Bahl

Mrs Julie Baud
Deputy Principal and Head of Teaching and Learning (F-12)

2019 Year 10 Subject Application Interviews

The 2019 Year 10 Subject Application Interviews are to be held in the VCE Centre next week, from Monday 13 August – Thursday 16 August, 3.30pm – 6.30pm.

Interview times can be made by phoning Reception on 8363 2000. Year 9 families should have received Subject Application Form A via email, in addition to the letter that was emailed out last week.

Year 9 students have also received a hard copy of the form yesterday, as well as a detailed explanation of the structure of the Year 10 program for next year. Families should bring the following items to the interview:

- 2019 Year 10 Subject Application Form A
- 2019 Year 10 Handbook
- Semester 1 Report
- Career Pathway Plan/Passport

Today I encouraged the Year 9 students to impress the importance of attending an interview upon their parents and carers. It is the first step in the process of discussing and planning life beyond Southern Cross Grammar and their possible VCE program; a vital opportunity to consider the many options available to them in a complex and rapidly changing world.

So, it would be good to see as many families as possible attend these interviews.

NAPLAN

The 2018 NAPLAN results should be received by the school in the coming weeks. Families of Year 3, Year 5, Year 7 and Year 9 students should be aware it is our intention to package these results with Progress Reports at the end of Term 3.

As has been discussed widely in the media, from 2019 all Year 3, Year 5, Year 7, and Year 9 students across Australia will complete the NAPLAN tests online.

As a result, a lot of preparation is currently taking place behind the scenes to help ensure schools are well prepared for this significant change.

One aspect of this preparation process is the compulsory NAPLAN Readiness Test, to be completed by one class from each of Year 3, Year 5, Year 7 and Year 9.

Students in 3.1, 5.1, 7.2 and 9.1 are therefore required to complete the online NAPLAN Readiness Test on Tuesday 28 August.

Parents and carers of students in these classes will receive further details about this in the next few days. It is important to remember this is a trial only, and the results are not utilised to track performance.

Ms Janis Coffey
Head of Middle School (5-9)

I often tell my students about my Year 9 Latin teacher who once said to us, “If you always act as though what you are doing at this present moment is the most important thing in the world, then there is nothing more that you can expect from yourself.”

For me, this is the essence of mindfulness.

It is the act of channeling our energy and focus into the current moment, be it a conversation with a teacher or listening to a presentation.

As students reflect on their performance and re-focus themselves on their goals this week, I remind students again to be mindful learners.

Students, take advantage of every opportunity to learn in the classroom by asking questions, seeking clarification and acting on feedback.

Being a mindful learner and getting focused also means eliminating distractions. For some of us, this means being better at working with technology. While iPads, phones, and other devices can be useful tools, there can be a shadow side to them which detracts from our ability to pay attention to the task at hand.

This week, I am re-publishing an article written by a dear friend and colleague, Dr. Georgiana Cameron. Cameron writes about how technology both helps and harms us.

My hope is that we are able to harness the power of these digital devices to become better and more mindful learners. Enjoy reading!

Technology and the Teenage Brain, by Dr Georgiana Cameron

What do we know about technology and teens?

The answer is less straightforward than it might seem. When the issue of teens and technology is raised there tends to be a minefield of opinions about its impact and what should be done to curb usage.

It's a topic that is highly relevant to parents and educators, with frequent news items suggesting that technology is affecting teens' brains, threatening the moral fabric of society, causing epidemic levels of addiction, and increasing social isolation and ill-being.

Many writers recommend that parents set guidelines and wean their children off screens where they can.

Advice often suggests allowing no screen time before school, mealtime or bedtime, but to use screen time as a reward after homework is finished.

Further advice includes making sure that protections are in place around internet access and social media, and talking to your child about why their screen time is being limited. The advice is often helpful, however much of it isn't derived from rigorous research.

*As neurobiologist, John Medina, explains in his book *Attack of the Teenage Brain*, research struggles to provide a clear picture of what is happening to teens because there are so many possible factors and questions to explore: is the individual predominantly using a phone or laptop?*

Is it video games, social media or Google being used? If social media, is it Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or Snapchat?

All of these factors have their own unique set of implications for teenage social, emotional and intellectual development.

When it comes to adolescents using technology, the genie is well and truly out of the bottle: research by the Pew Research Center in 2010 found that American adolescents were spending an average of 8.5 hours per day on their screens and 58% of 12 year olds owned a mobile phone – a significant rise from a mere 18% in 2004.

The study also revealed that 73% of teens using technology were on social networking sites (keep in mind this was 8 years ago!).

It's evident that there has been a dramatic digital revolution, which has occurred faster than any other communication innovation introduced throughout history.

With such a revolution, it is important to gather a better understanding of the positive and negative effects of technology so that parents, educators and teens can work better together to mitigate the risks and optimise the benefits.

In her article about the effects of internet use on the adolescent brain, researcher Kathryn Mills argues that although it is clear things that have changed, "there is currently no evidence to suggest that Internet use has or has not had a profound effect on brain development".

Research on the impact of technology is often contradictory and difficult to interpret. On one hand, a longitudinal study following teens over a one-year period found that social media use was associated with greater levels of empathy (Vossen & Valkenburg, 2016). Studies also found that social media use increases social connectedness for teens (Allen, Ryan, Gray, McInerney & Waters, 2014).

However, other studies found that social-media use also places teens at a higher risk of experiencing cyberbullying, Facebook-depression and sexting (O'Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011), and may negatively impact their ability to interpret face-to-face social cues (Uhls, et al., 2014).

Research into how gaming impacts attention is equally confusing, with some studies indicating that gaming can strengthen perception and cognition (Boot, Blakely & Simons, 2011), and others suggesting that playing more than one hour a day is associated with ADHD symptoms (Chan & Rabinowitz, 2006).

Studies on problematic internet use (sometimes classified as internet addiction), indicate a greater consensus around results. Experiencing difficulties with personal relationships, emotional regulation, self-regulation and the use of effective coping strategies is associated with internet addiction (Milani, Ousaldella & Blasio, 2009; Yu, Kim & Hay, 2013).

Neuroscience research suggests that compared to adults, adolescents are potentially more vulnerable to internet addiction. The neurotransmitter dopamine is largely responsible for the sense of pleasure triggered by our brain's reward circuitry when engaging in addictive behaviours.

When we see a red notification on our phone, pass to the next level of a game, or watch another funny cat YouTube clip, dopamine is responsible for setting off our anticipatory and positive feelings.

When repeated over time, this reward circuit can powerfully reinforce addictive behaviour. The developmental changes associated with adolescence have a tumultuous impact on dopamine levels within the brain (Casey, Jones & Hare, 2008; Giedd, 2012).

If we combine this with other brain-related changes in adolescence that are associated with impulsivity, risk-taking and emotional reactivity – the biology of young people places them at increased risk of engaging in addictive behaviours.

So where does this all lead us? It is important to remember that technology encompasses many different tools, some of which are more or less dangerous than others.

Most of these tools are neither good nor bad, it simply depends how they are used. When teaching someone how to effectively and safely use tools, whether it is a hammer, a fork, or a steering wheel – it is better to show than tell.

If a teenager divides their study time evenly between Snapchat and reading in preparation for an exam, telling them that multi-tasking reduces their performance is unlikely to change their behaviour. It may be better to find ways for young people to experience this for themselves.

For example, students could be asked to engage in an experiment around internet distraction during an in-class test so that they can see first-hand how it impacts their performance.

Beyond creating knowledge and awareness, we need to go further to help students develop healthy habits around technology use.

When discussing how to study for exams, we need to acknowledge the digital distractions and help students use psychological strategies like chunking the tasks into manageable segments, taking appropriate breaks, becoming self-aware of urges and distractions, and coping with stress.

And potentially most difficult of all, we need to be able to model these behaviours as both parents and educators.



Dr Georgiana Cameron is the Research Manager at the Institute of Positive Education.

As an educational psychologist and trainer, Georgiana has worked closely with individuals, families and whole school communities in supporting evidence-based approaches to improving wellbeing.

Ms Romina Pimpini **Head of Junior School (F-4)**

With a bumper term of events and activities in the Junior School, this week classes have been designing door ideas, planning costumes to wear, and gathering books to read.

Highlights in the next couple of weeks include the PFA F - Year 4 Disco, the MS Readathon, Word Mania, and of course, Book Week 2018.

Each and every one of these events and activities provides students with an opportunity to mingle with their peers, develop their personal skills, and share in achievements.

Linked to this are the Student Progress Interviews this week.

While we strive for improvement for each and every student as educators, we look to work with families to develop the whole child. As such, we must all realise that students learn from their successes, but importantly, they also learn from their failures and the challenges they face.

In meeting with teachers and gaining feedback, as well as developing goals, we hope to build each child's ability to realise our Student-Centred Vision and in particular its values of *Understanding Self, Taking Risks* and *Be Creative and a Problem-Solver*.



Recently, I came across several articles focused on building children's confidence—no matter their age, as we all understand the value of 'life lessons'.

I thought I would share one of these with you: www.brighthorizons.com/family-resources/e-family-news/2013-the-importance-of-mistakes-helping-children-learn-from-failure.

We look forward to working with you to assist your child in becoming an independent, active citizen in their future.

Next week, we will host an assembly in the Junior School on Friday, with a theme of 'The Big Ticket List', as a reflection of our term thus far, and to build upon all of the excitement to come.

I hope you can make it to see the array of student speakers we will have on Friday 17 August at 2:30pm in the JS Hub.

Safety Matters

A reminder to all students that the School Crossings are there to be used for your safety.

In particular, students should be using the crossing when walking to and from our school grounds on Gourlay Road.

This is a very busy road and your safety is most important. Parents and carers, we ask for your support in this matter —please speak with your children, no matter their age, about the importance of road safety.



Kirsten Smart
Year 2 Teacher and New Generation Learning Coordinator

NGL Day

The New Generation Learning Principles were in full swing during last week's NGL Day.

Students undertook a preferred workshop focusing on the theme 'Our Country: Past and Present' while enhancing their knowledge and skills around the SCG Student-Centred Vision Values.

It was obvious from roving the workshops that both students and teachers were highly engaged, and the collaborative learning observed between F – Year 9 students and Junior School and Middle School teachers was inspiring.

Although the day was cut short due to inclement weather, it is anticipated that the planned assembly items related to this event will be presented at our next whole school assembly.

During this Assembly, ten special awards, based on evidence of the Student-Centred Vision Values, will be distributed.



Artwork created in 'Foam Art'

NGL Student Leaders would like to acknowledge the following students:

- *Aiming High* is awarded to Sienna from workshop 'Flag Fun'.
- *Being Creative and a Problem-Solver* is awarded to Aiyana from workshop 'Australian Storytelling'.
- *Questioning and Exploring* is awarded to Jordie from workshop 'SCG Party Rocking Games'.
- *Being a Leader* is awarded to Melissa from workshop 'Cultural Dishes of Melbourne'.
- *Taking Risks* is awarded to Evan from workshop 'Games Galore'.
- *Doing Your Best* is awarded to Samantha from workshop 'SCG MasterChef'.
- *Listening and Respect* is awarded to Ben from workshop 'Foam Art'.
- *Being Fair and Helpful* is awarded to Callum from workshop 'Mulga Bill's Bicycle'.
- *Being Responsible* is awarded to Malik from workshop 'Multicultural Music Mania'.

- *Understanding Yourself* is awarded to Estelle from workshop 'SCG Party Rocking Games'.

Thank you to all staff and students for supporting this event.



Macey Radburn, Indiana Veitch and Hayley Im in workshop 'Our Languages Matter'



Artwork created in 'Foam Art'

Rajnish Ram

Learning Area Leader for Science, STEM and Computing

University of Melbourne Engineering project

Three Year 10 Engineering students today had the opportunity to take part in the 'Amazing Spaghetti Machine' competition at University of Melbourne on the 9th of August.

The competition, which focuses on the engineering abilities of Year 10 students, invites 20 selected schools from Victoria and 2018 was the inaugural year for SCG to compete.

Grace Muneretto, Tarun Chidambarabharathi and Obydah Abu-Hassan spent many hours after school on their project, and despite many challenges, they persevered to complete the project based on the Rube Goldberg machine.

Lorraine MacDonald

Head of English (F - Year 2) and Middle School Teacher



The first participation round has ended!

A huge congratulations to our Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6 students who received achievement certificates for their top rankings on the Leaderboard for Round One of Word Mania, (which ran between Monday 30th July until Sunday 5th August).

Year 1 – Ranked 3rd

Year 2 – Ranked 3rd

Year 6 – Ranked 2nd

Round Two has now officially begun and will run until this Sunday 11:59pm.

Our Round 2 results will determine whether we qualify for the finals. Keep playing for our chance to win a share in \$350,000 in prizes!

Current ranking within Melbourne's West:

	Skill – Competition	Participation – Round 2	National Leaderboard
Year 1	6th	Not yet ranked	71
Year 2	2nd	12th	10
Year 3	3rd	6th	7
Year 4	12th	15th	182
Year 5	6th	4th	39
Year 6	1st	1st	8

Keep up the great work, SCG Word Maniacs!

Mr Alex Espinosa
Classroom Teacher

In New Generation Learning class, the class of 8.1 recently offered some sweet, fun treats to students and staff, in order to raise money for cancer research as part of their entrepreneurship unit.

This class inspired the School with their entrepreneurial skills, kind hearts and compassion, raising nearly \$900 for Cancer Council Australia. Well done, and congratulations to all involved!

The Parents and Friends' Association



PFA F - 4 Disco

Friday 24 August at the Junior School Hub, 5:30 – 7:30pm



- ★ DJs & Dancing
- ★ Food & Games
- ★ Prizes & Fun

Help us celebrate Daffodil Day

By wearing your coolest yellow outfit

\$15 a ticket – all inclusive

Book here early so you don't miss out!

<https://www.trybooking.com/XDUN>

\$1 per ticket booking will be donated to the Cancer Council



Enrolment Update

We are experiencing a high level of interest regarding enrolment at Southern Cross Grammar with significant waitlists at all year levels for 2019 and beyond.

As you can appreciate, this is a wonderful position for our School. This strong interest will not alter our School's vision – that being, a medium-sized, independent school with a personalised approach.

Parents/Guardians of students who are not returning to Southern Cross Grammar in 2019 must provide notice in writing to enrolments@scg.vic.edu.au by no later than Friday 14 September. Your assistance here will greatly support the accurate and advance planning of our programs, and adheres to the Conditions of Entry signed by Parents/Guardians for each of our students.

Should you have any questions, please contact the School Registrar, Mrs Danielle Andrews, on 8363 2000 prior to the final notice date.

Road Safety

Please take care when travelling around our school's proximity, and keep the legal 40km/h speed zone in and around schools in mind, as student safety is important. Students must be dropped off safely onto the sidewalk, and cross the road at the pedestrian crossing when the light is green.

Lost property?

If your child is missing items of clothing or other school items, please ask them to check the Lost Property shelf in the Junior School and Middle School buildings.



BOOK WEEK 2018

COMING UP IN WEEK 6...



BOOKMARK MAKING WORKSHOP

YEARS F-4 & YEAR 5-9

Come along to a bookmaking workshop in the Learning Hub with our MS Captains. All materials supplied.

When: Tuesday 21 August

F – Year 4 : JS Recess

Year 5 – 9 : MS Lunch

Where: Junior School Learning Hub.

TUESDAY

THE GREAT BOOK SWAP

FOUNDATION – YEAR 6

Donate a preloved, good condition book to the 'The Great Book Swap'. Bring along a gold coin to participate.

All funds raised will go towards remote indigenous communities.

When: Wednesday 22 August

Where: Junior School Learning Hub.

WEDNESDAY

DRESS-UP PARADE

FOUNDATION – YEAR 4

Come dressed up as your favourite book character or use the theme 'find your treasure' as your inspiration for your costume.

When: (Foundation -4) – 8:45am

MS (Year 5-6) – 10:05am

Where: Junior School Learning Hub.

THURSDAY

DRESS-UP ACTIVITIES

YEAR 5 & YEAR 6

Come dressed up as your favourite book character or use the theme 'find your treasure' as your inspiration for your costume.

MS (Year 5-6) – 10:05am (P2)

Where: Junior School Learning Hub.

THURSDAY