

# STRATEGIC INTENT 2017



*Somerville House strives to provide an exemplary educational environment that enables students to discover and develop their talents in a safe, supportive Christian community, and to live a fulfilling life that makes a meaningful contribution to society.*





# LEARN AND EXPLORE EVOLVE AND GROW ENGAGE AND INSPIRE

*As a leading Australian school and a landmark in education, Somerville House provides the support and encouragement for students to become the best they can be.*

Since 1899, Somerville House has epitomised the essential elements of an exemplary school: intellectual rigour, teaching excellence, a caring Christian community, a wealth of opportunities and a stimulating environment fostering innovation and growth.

Our vision is to remain an exemplary school and a leader in education. The School continually invests in learning excellence, building capacity and proactively engaging with the community.

In 2014, Somerville House embarked on a journey of reflection and planning to develop a strategic direction for the next three years. This reflection included the acknowledgement of achievements since 2011, in addition to consultation with our governing bodies,

the Presbyterian and Methodist Schools Association (PMSA) and the School Council, along with the School community to create a rigorous plan for maintaining our position as a landmark in education. Our Strategic Intent is underpinned by three core planning areas:

- Learn and Explore
- Evolve and Grow
- Engage and Inspire

These three planning areas inform and set the direction across all operations of the School, encompassing the Junior, Middle and Senior Schools, Boarding, and Corporate Services. Plans will be monitored regularly and reviewed annually to ensure we are achieving objectives, proactively addressing emerging issues and taking advantage of new opportunities.

I acknowledge everyone who has helped shape the *Strategic Intent 2017*. There is something special about our School that has existed for over 116 years, an essence that we must always maintain. I look forward to continuing to work together to build a sustainable and exciting future for Somerville House.

F A KEARNEY  
PRINCIPAL

# CHRISTIAN FOUNDATIONS

*Respect, integrity and inclusiveness drive the School's behaviours, exemplified through our School motto, Honour Before Honours. As part of the PMSA family of schools, our endeavours are underpinned by strong Christian values, which include:*

## *RELATIONSHIPS*

Founded on God's relationship with us – through love, justice, compassion and forgiveness.

## *CARE*

Providing a safe environment for growth and development that respects self and the needs of others.

## *ETHICS*

Focussing on integrity, seeking the truth, right thinking and right action.

## *PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT*

Enabling growth, resilience, learning from mistakes and successes, continuous improvement and self-management.

## *EXCELLENCE*

Encouraging all to fulfil their potential.

## *CELEBRATION*

Recognising and celebrating the achievements of students, staff and the School's wider community.

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*Our vision is to remain an exemplary school and a leader in education.*

F A KEARNEY  
PRINCIPAL

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# LEARN AND EXPLORE

*Our Learn and Explore goals and the strategies we will use to achieve them are...*

## **EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES**

- Celebrate and strengthen our reputation for and commitment to an exceptional educational journey for each student according to their individual potential.
- Actively encourage a challenging, contemporary, and innovative curriculum, where staff can give their best to the education of the students.
- Develop, support and recognise teaching excellence.
- Utilise the quality learning platforms available in an effective, forward-thinking way.
- Attract, develop and retain exceptional staff and students.

## **A SAFE, SUPPORTIVE, INCLUSIVE CHRISTIAN LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

- Provide pastoral care programs for the students, staff and the wider School community, that develop, support, encourage and build wellbeing.
- Nurture a culture that is inclusive and reinforces the values of care, intercultural and international understanding, consideration and respect for others.
- Provide an exemplary learning and living environment for boarding students.

## **A WEALTH OF CO-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES**

- Enrich student learning with opportunities to participate and excel in co-curricular endeavours.
- Provide a distinctive Somerville House student experience.
- Facilitate a balanced educational experience for each student.

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*If you set your mind to a goal, are determined and have a team to support you, it is possible to do anything. When we take a step, we are followed and supported by our fellow students, families and teachers – our very own green team. It's an honour to be a girl in green and this bond will last a lifetime.*

MISS SOPHIE MALOUF  
CLASS OF 2015

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## COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

Recognised for her commitment to teaching and learning, Virginia Ayliffe was awarded the Sam Power Biennial Award for English/Literacy Teaching.

Her interest in pedagogy and practice has been complemented by her work with Independent Schools Queensland's Literacy and Number Coaching Academy and her work with Education Queensland's How to Teach online modules for early career teachers. She has also co-authored workbooks for the study of Shakespeare and National Literacy Testing in secondary schools.



## SOMERVILLE HOUSE STRING SENSATION

Somerville House student Cherin Lee has proven age is no barrier when it comes to the love of music. This violin virtuoso, picked up her first bow at the age of four and has achieved the enviable prize of Somerville House Year Level Dux for the past two years.

Under the watchful eye of Somerville House leading Strings teacher, Ms Loretta Fin, Cherin has an ever-growing list of musical

achievements including first prize placements in various local and national competitions including the Australian Strings Association's Concerto Competition.

In 2014, Cherin led the Somerville House Europe Tour Chamber Orchestra, performed as soloist with the orchestra in various cities in Europe, and received standing ovations at every concert.



# EVOLVE AND GROW

*Our Evolve and Grow goals and the strategies we will use to achieve them are...*

## **BEST PEOPLE, NEXT PRACTICE, QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE**

- Attract and retain high-performing staff and celebrate their achievements.
- Realise 'next practice' through the effective alignment and development of people, processes and systems.
- Provide a high quality, engaging, physical and virtual learning landscape.

## **EFFECTIVE RISK AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

- Maintain financial viability over the long-term.
- Promote risk management and business continuity initiatives to maintain a high degree of resilience.

## **CULTURE OF INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY**

- Develop an entrepreneurial culture and innovative approach to grow and enrich the School.
- Cultivate environmental awareness and sustainability.

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*My daughters have blossomed academically, and it is here that I cannot find fault. The manner in which they are learning, combined with the opportunities they have been offered, is astounding. My husband and I are very impressed. Both girls take great pride in being 'Somerville House Girls' and are loving their educational experience.*

MRS REGINA JONES  
CURRENT PARENT

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## HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Somerville House Boarding provides a warm supportive environment where each girl is encouraged to balance structure and routine with the freedom to explore and develop individually. We aim to educate our students to become confident and independent young women, conscious of their strengths, and capable and willing to contribute to the greater good of society.

Somerville House Boarders live in a purpose-built, contemporary and air-conditioned Boarding House, tailored specifically to girls' needs. The Boarding House incorporates modern bedrooms and bathroom facilities, shared leisure spaces, in-house kitchen areas, supervised study areas, sound-proof music

practice areas, and balconies overlooking Brisbane city.

The School's close proximity to the vibrant Brisbane CBD and South Brisbane cultural, leisure, tertiary and medical precinct afford our Boarders the opportunity to enjoy first class leisure opportunities while enjoying the School's Olympic pool, gymnasium, oval, tennis courts and performing arts complex.

This special home away from home is imbued with the Somerville House spirit, the friendliness, the feeling of belonging, and the shared commitment to living and learning together, in a community that supports and embraces our boarders.



## LEAP INTO LEARNING

The youngest members of our Somerville House school community enjoy state-of-the-art facilities with separate indoor and outdoor learning areas. Our Pre-Prep program aims to instill a love and curiosity of learning in all students through pre-literacy and pre-numeracy development in readiness for formal schooling while

also incorporating specialist classes in Music, Visual Arts, Christian Education, Foreign Language and Physical Education. Our program encourages children to LEAP as they Learn, Engage, Achieve and Play in a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment.



# ENGAGE AND INSPIRE

*Our Engage and Inspire goals and the strategies we will use to achieve them are...*

## *A STRONG SCHOOL COMMUNITY*

- Sustain strong, positive relationships with internal stakeholders: staff, students, families and governing bodies.
- Enhance the School's relationship with its Support Groups, Foundation members, Old Girls and Alumni.
- Foster a collaborative and supportive learning and workplace culture.

## *POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS*

- Strengthen links with internal and external stakeholders.
- Foster a culture of philanthropy and giving back.
- Engage actively in the wider community.

## *EXEMPLARY REPUTATION*

- Ensure the School's values, behaviours and endeavours are aligned.
- Promote and enhance the School's reputation in the community.

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*What I have achieved, whether it could be considered excellent or not, would not have been possible without the Somerville House community.*

MISS BRIDGET HARRINGTON  
2014 SOMERVILLE HOUSE PRINCIPAL'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE (CLASS OF 2008)

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## THE CLASSROOM WE BUILT

*"Although the work was hard, especially in the hot, humid summer of Laos, it was definitely worth it to see the (almost) finished product after our four days of labour. We were given an insight into the lives of the children who travel hours on foot and sit alongside seventy other students in a small classroom to receive an education. It gave us a life-altering outlook on the value of education and how lucky we are."*

SOMERVILLE HOUSE ANTIPODEANS ABROAD 2014

Sawadee! On 28 June 2014, twenty-three students, four teachers and two guides began an exciting trip to Thailand and Laos as part of an Antipodeans Abroad Community Service Tour specifically developed to combine community service work, sightseeing and cultural immersion.

The focus of the tour was to assist with school infrastructure improvement at a small, remote village in Northern Laos, through the provision of funds generated via pre-trip fundraising, and more specifically with hands-on classroom construction.



## DR ABIGAIL ALLWOOD CLASS OF 1990

Dr Allwood has been selected as the principal investigator for NASA's 2020 Mars rover expedition. She is the first female and Australian principal investigator on a Mars mission. Dr Allwood will be in charge of the Planetary Instrument X-ray Lithochemistry, also known as PIXL

for short, which will use X-rays to examine the chemistry of rock samples in search for evidence of life. Dr Allwood is a world-leading geologist and works at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California. In 2006 she was named one of the world's top ten scientific minds.



**SOMERVILLE HOUSE**  
HONOUR BEFORE HONOURS

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*A school of the Presbyterian and Methodist Schools Association.  
The PMSA is a mission of the Presbyterian and Uniting Churches.*

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