

Lateral Learning and Community Learning

The Lateral Learning Department is responsible for embedding essential skills and competencies for learning across all aspects of the school, traversing the curricular, cocurricular and pastoral programs. The Dean and the Coordinators of Learning Links (COLLs) work collaboratively with staff and students to offer a range of workshops, programs, guest speakers and cocurricular clubs and competitions that seek to develop the skills and capabilities of Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Communication, Collaboration and Citizenship.

The concept of Community Learning has evolved alongside the notion that education is holistic and develops students far beyond the traditional classroom, to sustain deep connections and exercise agency. More than ever before, we value learning that comes from multiple environments within the community. There is a need for deliberate opportunities that prepare students to transition into an unknown workforce.

At Meriden, this need sits in partnership with the Lateral Learning Department to provide students with experiences where they develop transferrable skills which are deemed vital for success in whatever field each girl may wish to pursue. It is the hope that engaging students in genuine opportunities to learn and participate in various communities fosters a love of learning and forms mutually beneficial connections.

We are excited to work with the team of COLLs across the Lateral Learning and Community Learning areas of the school and look forward to continuing to provide a wide range of exciting programs and initiatives across the school this year.

Lateral Learning

High Potential Learning – Ms Stella He oversees cocurricular programs, such as the da Vinci Decathlon and Tournament of Minds, that extend our Gifted and High Potential learners and works with teachers to embed strategies to support differentiation in the classroom.

Innovation – Mrs Alex Phillips promotes opportunities for students to participate in STEM initiatives and innovative programs, including Fab Lab, that help develop a future-focused and adaptable mindset, enabling students to become the innovators and creators of the future.

Research and Critical Thinking – Mr David Owens works closely with the Research Fellow, Dr Ann Goeth, to explicitly teach research and critical thinking skills, supporting students to become proficient and ethical users of information. Dr Goeth also runs a Media Literacy workshop for all Year 9 students.

Speech – Mrs Charlotte Yates runs a variety of workshops and cocurricular clubs, such as Speak Up!, that teach students how to deliver clear and engaging presentations, using a variety of delivery modes, whether it is in their subject areas or speaking on a topic they are passionate about as part of a public speaking competition.

Technology – Ms Nicola Casaceli supports teachers and students in their use of technology in the curricular and cocurricular programs, ensuring its use in an innovative, organised, responsible and ethical manner.

Ms Katie Bowie, our Teacher Librarian, works closely with the entire Library team, led by Miss Niumataiwalu, the Library Manager, to promote a variety of reading initiatives and literary engagement across all areas of the school. All Year 7 students take part in a year-long wide reading program. Ms Bowie also runs the cocurricular Writing Groups.

Community Learning

Cultural Connections – Mrs Jenny Greenhalgh is responsible for embedding cultural connections across the school. Mrs Greenhalgh works closely with Meriden staff to create links with First Nations communities, particularly the schools in Ti Tree and Neutral Junction.

Service Learning – Mr Kuhan Rajalingam, who is acting in the role while Mrs Harmont is on leave, oversees the Year 9 Service Learning Program and the establishment of service partnerships within the community. He also oversees the Year 9 Global Citizens Program, which encourages students to see themselves as individuals who are aware of local and global issues around them and actively seek to make a difference.

Head of Department Tertiary Pathways – Mr Ryan Richards is responsible for domestic and international tertiary pathways. Mr Richards, with his team of Tertiary Advisors, oversees the Year 10 Tertiary and Careers Program and the Student Futures Day, initiating and coordinating relationships with career pathway stakeholders and bringing worthwhile career exposure opportunities for Meriden girls.

The Day 11 Program

The Day 11 Program, which runs under the banner of Lateral Learning, also plays an important role in supporting students with their learning needs. Day 11 takes place once a fortnight on a Saturday (Week B on the timetable) during term time. Academic tutors are present in the Hudson Library and Research Centre to assist students with a range of subjects in a variety of academic departments. All students from Years 7 to 12 are welcome to attend and seek assistance as required, whether it be for homework, general revision, assistance with research and essay writing or preparation for an assessment task. Students have the option of joining the program in person in the Library or online, via Teams. The first Day 11 of this year will be held on Saturday 21 February. Students will receive an email with the schedule and sign-up details.

Ms Priscilla Curran

Dean of Community Learning

Mrs Sharna Kershaw

Dean of Lateral Learning