

Open Evening 2019

Principal's Address



mentone girls'
secondary college

Good evening everyone and thank you for coming out tonight.

Mentone Girls Secondary College (MGSC) is an exemplary government girls' school established in 1955 and was founded for the purpose of extending the educational pathways for girls. It was a pioneer in its time and continues to deliver an exemplary learning environment for each and every girl that walks through our doors today.

We continue to challenge the traditional views of what girls and women can achieve and we have an excellent track-record of our students entering into further education.

Research into girls' self-confidence and self-esteem in their adolescent years shows that, in a co-educational environment, that boys have a higher degree of these qualities than girls. However, this is not the case in an all girls' school – it is much higher.

The secondary school years are the crucial years in relation to your daughter's self-belief and self-confidence so I understand completely that you will be wanting to make the best possible decision for your daughter's future. I chose an all-girls school for my daughters and I have worked in all-girls schools for the past 24 years – I speak from experience, as a parent and as an educator, when I say that MGSC will prepare them to be well-rounded, confident young women.

You may have seen media stories about co-educational schools versus single-sex schools. What really interests me about these stories is that they tend to make statements such as "a single-sex school is not a reflection of the real world so it is better for girls to go to a co-educational school."

To statements like this I say, thank goodness girls' schools are different because in the real world, women are still having to agitate for equal opportunity in the workforce and equal pay. At MGSC we instill in our students the knowledge that they are equal and that nothing is beyond their reach if they work hard for it. At MGSC every leadership position is held by a girl and your daughters won't see a glass ceiling. They are more likely to be confident in their own abilities than they would be in a co-educational environment.

The proof of our effectiveness is in our results. Our NAPLAN results are excellent compared with the State average. Our VCE results remain consistently above the State average with the number of students receiving a VCE ATAR over 90 having doubled in the last two years.

Whilst co-educational schools offer girls' only mathematics and science classes to encourage girls into these subjects, we provide this to all of our students every single day.

Like all government schools, MGSC has a designated neighborhood zone. However, we take a significant number of students from well beyond our local area with students travelling from over 71 different suburbs. Our students travel from places such as Somerville, Frankston, Port Melbourne, Elwood, Dingley Village, South Melbourne, Chadstone, Keysborough and the list goes on.

Our reputation for providing a learning environment ***where every girl from everywhere can experience success*** is based on fact and is visible in our results.

We have a rich tradition of innovation in teaching and learning and strive to ensure that every student achieves their personal best. We value respect, compassion, independence and tolerance and provide opportunities for students to contribute to local and global communities through our curriculum and co-curricular programs. Your daughter will experience a safe, friendly and caring environment which fosters resilience and encourages initiative.

Whilst we have many historical buildings, we also have relatively new facilities for the Performing Arts, Visual Art, Media, The Middle School Wing, The Junior Learning Centre, The VCE Study Centre and the Library.

We invest in our school facilities to ensure that our students have access to modern equipment and amenities. We are continually landscaping, painting and renovating our buildings to ensure that our students have pleasant and comfortable surroundings.

Your daughter will be joining the college at a time of growth as we will be investing \$1.9 million dollars to renovate our Art and Technology spaces this year to create a purpose-built Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) Building that will incorporate all of these subject areas including digital technologies and robotics. It is anticipated that the building work will be completed by the end of this year in time so your daughters' can enjoy these state-of-the-art facilities next year.

But as they say in the commercials, there is more. MGSC is regarded as one of the top five sport schools in the state. We have developed a strong sporting culture over the past 15 years to be now regarded as the top single sex sport school in the State. Over the past eight years, we have had State finalists in football, soccer, netball, badminton, hockey, squash, tennis, softball, basketball, cross country, swimming, athletics, diving, golf, aerobics and cycling.

The College has produced state representatives in aerobics, athletics, cross-country, swimming and diving. As you can see we have a double gymnasium with a circuit room and tennis courts.

We feel that a healthy lifestyle, including physical fitness, is essential to your daughter's wellbeing. This year we will be investing \$650,000 to extend our sporting facilities even further by building an all-weather running track with facilities for high-jump, long jump, triple jump, soccer and football. \$200,000 of this has come to us by way of a community grant and we will be investing \$450,000 of our own funds to make this happen. Your daughter will be able to use these facilities from the beginning of 2020. The proposal is on display in the foyer and PE areas tonight.

We know that some of your daughters are interested in the Performing Arts area too. The College offers specialist programs such as Instrumental Music and Band forms and Theatre studies and this year we have launched our Enhancement Program.

At MGSC we value the development of the whole person through the provision of a Personal Learning program that has a focus on wellbeing. We have a wide range of co-curricular programs and have a strong Student Leadership Program. We promote student agency and voice, diversity, respect, personal best, school pride and student wellbeing.

As the only government girls' school in the South Eastern Suburbs we have an important role to play in the education of young women so that they reach their full potential. We don't believe that families should have to pay excessive school fees so that their daughters can attend a single-sex school. We offer our diverse program to families for an affordable cost - even by comparison to some government co-educational schools.

The school you choose has the potential to influence how your daughter sees herself in the future. The question is do you want your daughter to challenge cultural norms or merely follow them?

There is no other all-girls' government school in the South Eastern suburbs. I can say with conviction that we will offer every girl an opportunity to experience success in whatever area they are passionate about.

I welcome you to apply for entry to Mentone Girls' Secondary College so that your daughter will be prepared for a future where anything is possible.

Ms Linda Brown
Principal