Great traditions, a confident future.
A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Keira’s central purpose is to prepare young people to take up their role as intelligent, caring and committed citizens within Australian society. To this end, we emphasise academic achievement but also encourage students to engage in co-curricular activities. This ranges from representative sporting teams, performing arts experiences, peer support programs, student leadership opportunities and much more. The school has a strong student welfare ethos and endeavours to instill in all students the values of excellence, cooperation, acceptance and integrity.

Mr D J Robson
Principal

A BRIEF HISTORY OF KEIRA

Keira High School is a comprehensive, co-educational school that has a long tradition of delivering quality education to the community of Wollongong. The school was established in 1917 as Wollongong Junior Secondary Technical School. In 1939 land was purchased near the Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow on which new school buildings were later built. In 1954 the school moved onto this site in Lysaght Street. Some years later, the school was renamed Keira Boys’ High School. In the early 1980s, the State Government determined that the school would become co-educational with the first female students enrolling in 1984. The school was renamed Keira High School. In 1990, the school became a technology high school. Today, Keira High School is proud of its rich history and traditions but looks to the future as a confident, innovative and dynamic school.

THE SCHOOL CREST

The school’s crest is a traditional shield designed and adopted in 1984 when the school became co-educational. It represents both strength and protection. The school’s motto since 1917, Excelsior, is the comparative form of Excelsus, Latin for high or lofty, Excelsior then means ‘ever higher’. Longfellow, the American poet, provided Keira’s first teaching staff with the inspiration to adopt the word Excelsior as our motto. Longfellow wrote a poem on the incessant aspiration for youth to achieve, ending with the line, “A voice replied, ‘For up the height, Excelsior’.

PARENTS and CITIZEN ASSOCIATION

The Keira High School Parents and Citizens Association (P&C) meets on the first Wednesday evening of each month during school term. The meetings start at 7.30pm and are held in the staff Common Room. All parents are welcome. Newsletters are posted home prior to each meeting with news and information regarding the school.

Mrs R Tindall
P&C President
WHAT IS DIFFERENT ABOUT YEAR 7 AT KEIRA?

Keira High School works very hard to ensure the transition of Year 6 students into high school is successful and enjoyable.

Since 2004 we have been constantly evaluating the transition of students into high school and how they have performed as both a group and as individuals. Their social and academic success has been the centre of our assessment. The evaluation has involved students, parents and teacher surveys. Quantitative and qualitative data has been collected.

Since 2004, the school has created single sex classes for the core subjects in Year 7. It is anticipated that this will also be the case in Year 7, 2016. We believe this creates a more settled and productive learning environment. Given that Keira is co-educational, we believe we have created the best of both worlds—single sex classes for most subjects but within a co-educational setting. Girls and boys still have opportunities for positive interaction but will have a settled experience in class without some of the distractions.

In addition to our single sex classes, Keira High School was the first school in the state to include Aboriginal Studies as a separate course for Year 7. Every course in Stage 4 incorporates an Aboriginal perspective but this course allows all students to gain a deeper understanding of Aboriginal Peoples of Australia and their culture.
KEIRA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT WELFARE and DISCIPLINE POLICY

When parents/caregivers enrol their children at Keira High School they enter into a partnership with the school staff to provide a secure environment in which each member of the school community is able to work effectively and achieve personal success.

This partnership is based on shared responsibility and mutual respect. It should aim at achieving effective learning and good discipline so that the school environment is both productive and harmonious. The partnership must strive to create in children an understanding of appropriate behaviour.

Such understanding should lead the student to develop a responsibility for his or her own behaviour.

The precise character of this partnership will be unique to each student. There are, however, certain expectations in common to all such partnerships.

Parents/caregivers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school. They share in the responsibility of shaping their children’s understandings and attitudes about acceptable behaviour. They assume greater responsibility for their children’s behaviour as their children travel to and from school.

Teachers are responsible for the education and care of their students when at school. Their task is to provide the best possible program to meet the needs, capabilities and aspirations of each student. They are also responsible for appropriately communicating with parents/caregivers about the educational progress and behaviour of each student.

When the partnership is based on mutual respect, each partner will support the decisions and responsibilities exercised by the others.

MERIT SYSTEM

The Keira High School Merit System is a key initiative that strengthens the learning culture at Keira. Underpinning the Merit System is the belief that in order to be empowered for the challenges of their present and future lives, students must develop the capacity to appreciate and celebrate the qualities that are necessary to not only survive in the real world, but thrive.

The Keira High Merit System is therefore a whole-school initiative that acknowledges and celebrates personal qualities of students that are deemed highly valuable traits for a young person to possess. These traits include improvements in organisation, leadership, initiative, teamwork, courage, compassion, work ethic and perseverance in the pursuit of excellence, just to name a few. Full details of the Merit System structure can be found on the school's website.
DIRECTED SENIOR PROGRAM

Success in the HSC requires the combination of hard work, organisation and help from experts in the individual subjects. At Keira, the capacity of students to develop these qualities is accelerated through the Directed Senior Study Program. The Directed Senior Study Program is a whole school initiative that is run in the school's Learning Centre. Students attend Senior Study as a mandatory requirement when they do not have a subject of study in a particular period on their timetable.

The Directed Senior Study program is designed to provide students with the opportunity to receive personalised and professional learning experiences that help them to improve their study skills, organisation and learning habits. Students are engaged and assisted by staff timetabled on to the Directed Senior Study program. A particularly special feature of the program is that we have a specialist study expert, Ms Ramos, timetabled on to Senior Study on a full time basis. Ms Ramos is an ex-Head Teacher who also specialises in a program called Mindfulness, which centres around maximising wellbeing. Through the Directed Senior Study program, Ms Ramos offers personalised workshops for students interested in building their capacity as learners. The Directed Senior Study program is therefore a highly valued initiative of Keira High School that further demonstrates our commitment to preparing our students for life after school to our fullest capacity.

CANTEEN

Our award-winning canteen is run by a paid supervisor, with the help of a part-time assistant. The rest of the work comes from voluntary helpers. Funds come to the school by the efforts of parents who give of their time and energy at the school canteen. Their work is of immense value to the school, not only because nutritious food is provided for the students, but also because a profit is made to provide those extras that make teaching/learning so much more effective.

The KHS canteen is a healthy canteen adhering to the guidelines of the “Healthy Kids School Canteen Association”. All food is prepared and cooked fresh daily on the premises.

Parents/caregivers interested in helping in the canteen should contact the canteen on 4228 7657.

Orders for recess and lunch may be placed before school.
SCHOOL CONTRIBUTION

In order to resource all curriculum programs in their current form, it is vital for parents to provide some essential learning resources and materials. This takes the form of a school contribution that is to be collected from all students from Year 7 to 12. All parent contributions are spent on classroom resources for students.

The money collected allows the school to supplement a range of learning support programs including additional texts, photocopying, technology facilities, sporting equipment, student welfare initiatives and co-curricular activities. This makes for a more interesting, dynamic and diverse school. The learning outcomes of all students are therefore improved with the use of the resources.

For 2016, the school has set the contributions as follows (unchanged since 2001):
Years 7 - 10 $50.00
Years 11 - 12 $65.00

SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

The school newsletter is published fortnightly and is either emailed or posted to each student’s postal address. You can view our newsletter online or subscribe to receive emails via the school website at www.keira-h.schools.nsw.edu.au

The newsletter contains interesting and important information that students, parents and caregivers need to know. Please notify the school if contact details are changed.

BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE - BYOD

Students in Year 7 and 8 are encouraged to BYOD to be used in conjunction with learning strategies in the classroom. Students will need parental permission to BYOD and will be required to agree to both terms and conditions of the school BYOD Policy.

TRAVEL PASSES

Students living two kilometres or more from school are entitled to a travel pass. If your place of residence is not on a direct route to this school it may be necessary for you to apply for two travel passes - two bus passes or one bus pass and one train pass for each section of the route. A separate form is required for each application. Application forms are available from your primary school or this school.
SCHOOL UNIFORM

The tone and prestige of a school is important for the future of students as they leave and join the wider community. You can assist your child and the school by providing the correct uniform and ensuring the co-operation of your child with dress and deportment. The correct school uniform helps in creating a sense of belonging and assists in developing the correct mental set in the student about the purpose of school for the day. The wearing of the school uniform is also required on most school excursions. On some field excursions casual clothes are more appropriate. The teacher will advise the students if casual clothes are required.

STAGE 4 CURRICULUM (YEARS 7 and 8)

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ABORIGINAL STUDIES

Aboriginal Studies provides students with the unique opportunity to gain knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal Peoples of Australia, their culture and their lifestyles. This course is an exploration and celebration of Aboriginal social and cultural heritage and its longevity. Students have the opportunity to gain authentic Aboriginal perspectives through the teachings of local and regional Aboriginal community members and explore the diverse and changing nature of Aboriginal culture.

We Acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this Land.
ENGLISH

The English Faculty at Keira High School is a dynamic, creative and enthusiastic faculty that consistently provides a challenging and sophisticated quality teaching and learning environment for every student. It is comprised of a diverse and talented group of people who form a cohesive team; these individuals range from new and beginning teachers to those who are experienced and passionate about their profession, encompassing experience and expertise.

English is a compulsory subject for all students. Senior courses offered include: English Extension 1 and 2, Advanced, Standard and English Studies.

The faculty is excited about their innovative and improved programs that align with the new curriculum. There remains a strong focus on the explicit teaching of grammar and spelling.

We deal with a variety of texts that range from Shakespeare to picture books to classics and modern Australian plays and novels that deal with a plethora of concepts and contemporary issues. Visual literacy is a vital component of the English courses, which allows for the study of many historical and modern films as texts.

It is essential to acknowledge the role that the First Peoples of our nation have played in our heritage. Consequently, many of our texts and programs deal respectfully and sensitively with indigenous issues in a variety of textual forms.

Student engagement is enhanced through the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in all English classrooms.
MATHEMATICS

The Mathematics courses at Keira High School aim to create confidence and enjoyment in doing mathematical and numerical activities. Students develop an awareness of how mathematics can be used to solve problems in everyday life. They also learn of its contribution to the development of society. Students are encouraged to develop their mathematical thinking, understanding, confidence and competence in solving mathematical problems.

Mathematics courses also aim to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in the following areas:

- logical, flexible, fluent and original thinking;
- computation and problem solving skills;
- appropriate language for the effective communication of mathematical ideas and experiences;
- an ability to recognise mathematical patterns and relationships;
- a variety of methods for calculation and problem solving;
- an awareness of the basic structure of mathematics by an appreciation of the nature and interrelationship of the various strands of mathematics.

Mathematics is a compulsory subject for all students in NSW from Year 7 to Year 10 (optional in Year 11 and Year 12). The Mathematics syllabus recognises that students develop mathematical skills at different rates to those in other subjects. For this reason the Mathematics course is a continuum of learning that occurs from the beginning of primary school to the completion of Year 10.

At Keira High School, the Mathematics Faculty fully supports the spirit of the learning continuum by offering differentiated learning in all Year 7 classes, while incorporating two classes for extension courses in Year 8. In Years 9 and 10, there are two separate pathways of study (5.2 and 5.3 Courses) and these are offered to students dependant on their results at the end of Year 8.
SCIENCE

The Science faculty at Keira High School is currently made up of nine teachers including a Head Teacher. Most of these teachers have experience of teaching two or more of the senior courses and, in most cases, accreditation to teach three or more of these.

The faculty represents a collective experience of over 80 years of teaching Science yet contains teachers in the early stages of their careers. Another aspect of the depth of knowledge within the faculty is 32 years working in practical applications of Science outside of education including chemical manufacturing, chemical monitoring, quality control and microbiology. This 'real world' experience adds considerably to the collective expertise of the faculty.

Experience with HSC marking, high ICT skills and networking with professional groups adds further capacity to the team.

The faculty prides itself on quality teaching, providing innovative and progressive experiences to all students. Naturally there is an emphasis on practical work (including field work) and this is supported through class activities that employ a wide variety of strategies.

Facilities at Keira include seven teaching laboratories and associated preparation rooms and stores. Two of our labs have recently been refitted with a more modern and efficient layout and new fittings and are now state-of-the-art practical and teaching rooms. Funding has been allocated to upgrade another laboratory with completion anticipated during 2015. All of the teaching laboratories at Keira feature data projectors and audio systems. At present four labs have interactive whiteboards and further acquisitions should see this number grow shortly.

*Science* is a compulsory course for Years 7 to 10. In Years 9 and 10 there is the option of studying the elective course *Marine and Aquaculture Technology*. For Years 11 and 12 the courses *Biology, Chemistry* and *Physics* are currently offered as options for the Higher School Certificate.
INFORMATICS

Keira has well-equipped computing rooms. Although these are available for use by all classes, Informatics courses have dedicated timetabling to ensure that each class has access to the necessary ICT.

Students in Year 7 study Computing Skills for 2 periods a week. In Year 8, elements of ICT are taught within DAT (see TAS). In Years 9 and 10 students can elect to take the course Information and Software Technology. For Years 11 and 12 the courses Software Design and Development and Information Processes and Technology are currently offered as options for the Higher School Certificate.

Informatics courses are taught by qualified teachers but these may be drawn from different faculty areas.

HUMAN SOCIETY and its ENVIRONMENT

The Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE) faculty at Keira High School is diverse and offers a number of different subjects to students including History and Geography in the junior years and then subjects such as Business Studies, Legal Studies, Economics, Society and Culture, Ancient and Modern History in the senior years. We also offer elective subjects to students in Years 9 and 10 including Commerce and Elective History.

This diverse range of subjects requires a diverse teaching staff. In the HSIE faculty we have teachers in their early careers, but, also a number of teachers that have up to 20 years or more experience in teaching.

Our assessments cater for a range of students and equip them with an understanding of the skills necessary to excel in the 21st century. The knowledge and skills developed whilst doing a HSIE subject at Keira High School will allow our students to become articulate, critical thinkers and understand the importance of their rights and responsibilities as Australian and global citizens.
LEARNING and SUPPORT
The Learning and Support Team work collaboratively with classroom teachers and parents to plan and implement appropriate learning programs that include differentiation, ensuring that the learning needs of all students are being met.

The team is responsible for establishing, implementing and supporting professional learning for staff that enhances teaching and learning practices for students with additional learning needs. The development of Individual Learning Plans, Transition Plans, Behaviour Plans and the implementation of Inclusive strategies across the school are also a major focus of the team. Coordination of Disability Provisions in the senior school and the coordination of Naplan testing and utilisation of this data are other roles that the team provide. Members of the team regularly monitor student progress and liaise with staff, parents, counsellors and outside agencies in order to support the learning needs of all students.

STUDENT WELFARE
The role of this team is to support the physical, social and emotional wellbeing of students, through the development and delivery of student welfare programs. These programs are designed to foster a caring and tolerant attitude toward others, to ensure mutual respect, a cohesive environment and a sense of belonging is achieved at all times. At KHS there is a strong school-wide commitment to ensure that, for all students, school is a happy, positive and fulfilling experience.

Across all year groups, various programs such as Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying, Driver Safety, Cyber Safety and Mental Health programs are implemented in order to support student Wellbeing. Members of the team meet regularly, liaise with staff, parents and outside agencies in order to identify and address the needs of students and initiate positive and proactive change.
CREATIVE and PERFORMING ARTS

Any literature relating to 21st century learning makes mention of ‘creativity’ as a desirable and necessary quality to enable students to fully participate in their world.

Creativity is at the very core of the Key Learning area Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA). CAPA at Keira High School is central to the learning of all students in Years 7 and 8, as they undertake a mandatory 100 hours of Music and 100 hours of Visual Arts.

A significant proportion of students in the years above elect to study a range of subjects in the creative arts: Dance, Drama, Music, Photographic and Digital Media, Visual Arts and Visual Design. Studies in the classroom are well supported by a vital program of co-curricular activities that extend learning completed during regular school time.

Band, Vocal Group, guitar tuition, Music: Count Us In, Performing Arts Evening, Unplugged Concerts, Arts Under the Stars and our biannual Whole School Production are just some of the activities in which students may become involved in the grounds of Keira High School.

Beyond the school students have the opportunity to be part of Southern Stars, Wotopera, Keirabald, ISER Touring ensembles and Theatresports.

The Creative and Performing Arts Faculty believe strongly that our students must experience the real world of the arts, and a number of excursions are held each year, including ArtExpress, Belvoir St Theatre, Meet the Music, National Gallery of Australia, OnStage, Sculpture by the Sea, Sydney Theatre Company as well as local productions at the IPAC and Wollongong City Gallery.

Our students leave Keira High School with strong HSC results and a valuable experience of the Creative Arts that will continue to enrich their lives beyond school and contribute towards their own and others’ lives.
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH and PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The Personal Development Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) syllabus offers a unique opportunity to promote the physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual health of students. At Keira, the PDHPE staff meet this opportunity with innovative programs that target and develop the personal strengths of students to empower and prepare them for life after school. PDHPE programs at Keira therefore seek to build the capacity of students to successfully navigate a range of issues impacting their lives such as mental health, nutrition, sexual health, physical activity, social issues, drug use, planning for a career, digital citizenship and appreciating diversity. In addressing these issues, students are guided in developing their capacity as 21st century learners, building knowledge and skill in relation to key traits such as resilience, communication, leadership, problem solving, creativity, critical thinking, team work and independent learning in the process.

The structure of PDHPE programs at Keira ensures that whilst all students develop the ideals mentioned above in the mandatory 7 – 10 PDHPE curriculum, students wishing to extend their knowledge and skill in PDHPE further may do so by choosing to undertake one of the elective courses identified below:

- Physical Activity and Sport Studies (PASS). Available as an elective to students in Year 9 and 10.
- Dance. Available as an elective to students in Years 9 and 10.
- Stage 6 Personal Development Health and Physical Education. Available as a senior course for students in Years 11 and 12.
- Stage 6 Sport, Lifestyle and Recreation Studies (SLR). Available as a senior course for students in Years 11 and 12.

Through being offered these exciting courses, students at Keira High School are presented with the options to personalise their learning to build lifelong skills that will ultimately equip them for the opportunities and challenges awaiting them in their present and future lives.
TECHNOLOGY and APPLIED STUDIES

Technology Education forms an incredibly important part of our school’s curriculum. We aim to provide knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes essential for all students to succeed in and beyond their schooling.

The Technology and Applied Studies (TAS) Key Learning Area at Keira HS is comprised of the Industrial Arts and Home Economics Faculties. We have eight very high quality teachers who bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to our school and allow us to deliver a diverse and engaging range of subjects to our students.

In Stage 4, students rotate each term through eight separate modules. Project-based learning allows them to really enjoy their classwork and to build their knowledge and understanding of a broad range of materials, tools and processes. We have a strong focus on the development of problem-solving and communication skills and our programs are designed to ensure students at all levels are challenged and engaged whilst learning.

The faculty structure is such that students are able to follow clearly defined pathways through to Year 12. We offer a broad range of high quality electives in Years 9 and 10 that provide a strong platform for senior school. The faculty boasts a long tradition of outstanding HSC results, with students regularly achieving their highest HSC marks in their TAS subject. Alternative pathways are offered through Vocational Training courses where students can complete a TAFE qualification at school as part of their HSC.
LANGUAGES

The language faculty forms a critical educational and neurological role in a complete education. It is a common and established understanding that students of languages reorganise their thinking to accommodate the structure of another language; they develop cognitive flexibility and problem-solving and this ability can be applied into other spheres of learning; critical thinking and creative approaches are also enhanced. Student engagement in the rigorous study of a second language provides an enriched experience of the social, cultural and cognitive benefits that enhance a student’s life and opportunities.

Year 10 Language classes attend Study Days at the University of Wollongong. These days are fantastic days of language learning and team building. They encourage future language learning at university level and inspire the students to participate in a foreign exchange, the best education anyone could ever receive.

JAPAN TOUR 2014

In 2014 students of Keira High School were fortunate enough to experience a Study Tour of Japan. During the tour the students were exposed to Japanese history, culture and most importantly, opportunities to practice and develop their Japanese language skills.

The tour started in Hiroshima where students participated in Japanese language lessons and stayed with a host family to have a first-hand experience of Japanese culture and language. After their homestays, the group travelled to Kyoto.

In the old imperial capital of Kyoto students were amazed by sites such as the Golden Pavilion, Silver Pavilion and the fortified palace of the old Shogunate, Nijo Castle. The Keira High School Study tour gives our students the opportunity to experience the wonders of the culture and history of Japan whilst engaging in an authentic experience of the language.

The Japanese language faculty will host three Japanese school groups during this term, utilise Japanese language ambassadors from the University of Wollongong and begin its preparations for the next potential Japan Study Tour of 2016. Languages really do open up opportunities for students in this increasingly globalised world.
Keira High School has begun a tradition of making the journey to Central Australia every few years. In 2013, 40 adventurous students made the voyage through New South Wales, Queensland, Northern Territory and South Australia by coach over 15 days.

The students experienced the true camping lifestyle while taking in the unique beauties that Australia has to offer. Many tours are included in the adventure, which allowed the group to go underground at Mt Isa, stroll around the base of Uluru and climb Kings Canyon.

The students gained many life skills such as time management, budgeting, responsibility of their property, tolerance and communication. Whilst travelling through the Northern Territory, there is a focus on Aboriginal Culture, which allowed the students to gain an even greater appreciation.

The trip was an amazing experience in itself, however adding to its value was the fun, humorous bus driver/tour guide who kept the students on guard with his practical jokes. The students thoroughly enjoyed the sightseeing and daily activities with each town that was visited.

The Central Australia Tour coach is set to depart again in April 2016 and preparations are well on their way. The maiden voyage was a great success and the next trip is guaranteed to be even better.
Great traditions, a confident future.