



# Inspiring Excellence





### **Acknowledgement of Country**

Radford College acknowledges the Ngunnawal people, the Traditional Custodians of this Land, whose treasured cultures and customs have nourished and continue to nourish the Land on which we meet, play and learn.

We pay our respect to Elders past and present and express gratitude for their ongoing contribution towards education.

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# From the Principal

Christopher Bradbury

Welcome to the inaugural edition of *Inspiring Excellence*, a new publication dedicated to highlighting the extraordinary dedication, intellectual rigour and passion that define the staff of Radford College.

When we reflect on what makes a Radford education truly transformative, our thoughts naturally turn to our students – their curiosity, their milestones and the grounded, ethical young people they become. Yet, behind every flourishing student is a team of exceptional professionals who design the learning, cultivate the environment and provide the encouragement required for young people to reach their potential.

At Radford, we are fortunate to attract and retain staff who are not only masters of their respective disciplines, but who also embody a profound commitment to service and personal growth. Recognising the achievements and talents of our staff is about more than celebrating individual success – it is about honouring the culture of care and high expectation that makes our College thrive. Whether it is an innovative teaching strategy in the classroom, a groundbreaking co-curricular initiative or the seamless expertise of our professional and operational team, every effort directly shapes the environment in which our students learn and grow. When our staff excel, our entire community is lifted.

At the heart of our strategic vision is a simple, enduring truth: an investment in our staff is an investment in our students and families. For our teaching staff, this means engaging deeply with evidence-based pedagogy and refining instructional strategies to ensure every student experiences academic rigour paired with personalised support. Equally vital is our professional and operational staff, who form the backbone of the Radford community. Investing in their professional development ensures that our systems, facilities and care structures remain world-class, creating a seamless, supportive and secure environment for learning.

When parents entrust their children to Radford, they are investing in a holistic experience defined by quality, integrity and warmth. By empowering our staff through targeted, continuous professional development, we guarantee that the Radford experience remains exceptional, relevant and deeply impactful for every family.

Our dedicated focus on staff development is not merely an operational goal; it is a fundamental pillar of our overarching strategy. Radford's strategic commitment to Professional Practice is encapsulated in our unrelenting focus to elevate teaching and learning through innovative professional learning, visionary leadership development and pioneering educational research.

**Innovative professional learning:** We encourage our educators to be active, reflective learners. By fostering collaborative learning communities and peer observation, we ensure that our classrooms are vibrant centres of intellectual curiosity and modern practice.

**Visionary leadership development:** Great schools cultivate leadership at every level. We actively invest in developing the leadership capabilities of our staff – equipping middle and senior leaders, as well as emerging talent across teaching and professional and operational staff, with the strategic vision, emotional intelligence and agility required to guide our community into the future.

**Pioneering educational research:** Radford is committed to being a contributor to the broader educational conversation, not just a consumer of it. By engaging in educational research, partnering with tertiary institutions and testing innovative methodologies, our educators ensure that our academic programs are grounded in sound, cutting-edge evidence that directly translates into improved student outcomes.

As you read through the stories, achievements and insights captured in this edition of *Inspiring Excellence*, I hope you share in the immense pride I feel for our staff. Their talent, resilience and passion are the ultimate engines of our College's success.

By celebrating their achievements and continually investing in their growth, we reinforce the promise at the heart of a Radford education: to inspire our students to pursue their personal best, guided by professionals who model that very same pursuit of excellence every single day.

# The Radford Institute

Dr Andrea Stringer

The Radford Institute provides structure and purpose, with teaching excellence at its core. Staff growth, leadership capability and evidence-informed frameworks ensure rigour, alignment and continuous improvement.

At the heart of the Radford Institute are six interconnected pillars that drive continuous growth, innovation and excellence:

- **Professional Learning** combines school-embedded learning and external expertise, guided by the Professional Learning Cycle and Professional Learning Plans.
- **Educational Research** fosters evidence-informed practice through practitioner inquiry, Professional Learning Plans and postgraduate study, with learning applied to teaching, leadership and curriculum design and shared across the College community.
- **Leadership Development** builds capability, confidence and influence across a range of roles and career stages.
- **Professional Pathways** support career progression, professional recognition and ongoing professional growth through induction, accreditation, scholarships, postgraduate study, research and conference participation.
- **Partnerships** enhance professional learning, research and leadership development through collaboration with universities, professional organisations and visiting experts.
- **Knowledge Sharing with Community** extends expertise beyond the College through publications, events and engagement with the wider education community.

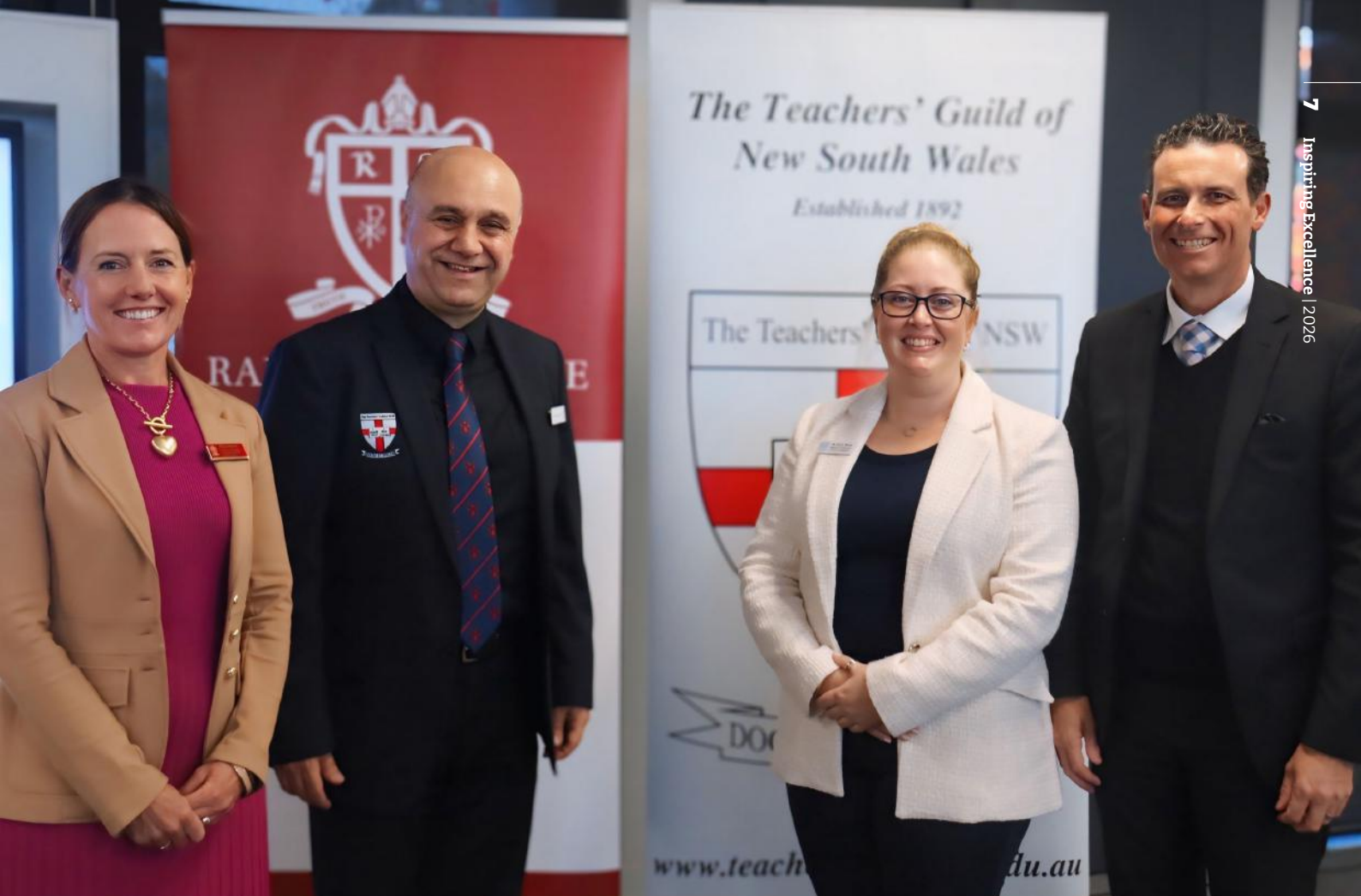
This *Inspiring Excellence* magazine reflects the Knowledge Sharing with Community pillar of the Radford Institute, showcasing the collective expertise being developed across Radford College.

Principal Chris Bradbury is Chair of the ACT Branch of the Teachers' Guild of NSW. The newly established ACT Teachers' Guild brings together educators from across sectors to share expertise, foster professional learning and strengthen educational practice. Grounded in the belief that collective knowledge drives improvement, the Guild creates opportunities for meaningful dialogue, collaboration and leadership within the ACT education community.

Through the Institute and the Guild, staff have engaged with leading educational thinkers and practitioners. Professor Phil Cummins, Founder and Director of the Sydney Character Initiative, challenged us to consider not only what students know, but who they are becoming. His insights highlighted the importance of character, purpose and contribution as central to a flourishing education. Renowned clinical psychologist and author Andrew Fuller also inspired staff with insights into learning strengths, resilience and student success, highlighting how understanding the unique ways students learn can transform both engagement and achievement.

The Institute also plays an important role in engaging parents, carers and the broader community. Through a series of parent masterclasses, respected experts shared research and practical strategies to support student learning and wellbeing. Paul Dillon explored why adolescents take risks and how families can help keep young people safe, sharing practical strategies for supporting teenagers' growing independence while promoting safety and wellbeing. Professor Phil Cummins examined the role of character, agency and intentional growth in helping young people flourish in an increasingly complex world and highlighted how families and schools can work in partnership to nurture resilience, integrity and leadership. Andrew Fuller provided practical insights into wellbeing, resilience and the developmental factors that influence young people, equipping parents with strategies to strengthen relationships and navigate life's transitions with confidence and understanding.

At its heart, the Radford Institute is about people: empowering staff to learn, lead and thrive while sharing knowledge that strengthens our community and supports every student's success.



Phil Cummins spoke about 'shaping future-ready education through character and leadership'



# The importance of developing middle leaders

Dr Andrea Stringer

Vision sets the direction. Strategy sets the path. Behind every successful school strategy are middle leaders who translate vision into meaningful action. Heads of Department, Heads of Year and Coordinators sit where whole-school vision meets daily classroom reality. They translate the Principal's and Executive Team's vision for curriculum, assessment and inclusion into teaching programs, staff briefings and moment-to-moment classroom decisions. With skilled execution at this level, strategic priorities become consistent, meaningful practice across Radford College.

Middle leaders are increasingly recognised as critical to school improvement, yet their leadership responsibilities are often complex and insufficiently supported. Lipscombe et al. (2020) argue that middle leaders are central in leading teaching, learning and pastoral care, and that middle leadership warrants greater attention in Australia. More recent Australian research reinforces this, finding that middle leaders have comparatively few opportunities for targeted professional development, and that learning needs to be responsive to the reality of their roles (Harris et al., 2026). Often overlooked, middle leadership development sits between teacher professional learning and senior leadership programs designed for principals and deputy principals.

Well-developed middle leaders multiply impact across the staff cohort. A middle leader who gives precise feedback, navigates difficult conversations effectively and coaches colleagues, builds the capability of others. Radford College has invested in a tailored High Performance Leadership Program for our 25 middle leaders. This program will improve outcomes for dozens of teachers and hundreds of students, making it one of the most cost-effective forms of professional development.



Karen Gately from Corporate Dojo worked with our middle leaders throughout the year



Deliberate development builds a sustainable succession plan from within, and teachers who feel their leadership potential is recognised and nurtured are more likely to remain in the profession, reducing the costly cycle of recruitment and induction that can disrupt school culture. Structured mentoring and coaching, dedicated leadership time and targeted training all signal that a school values growth, not just output. The evidence is clear: schools that invest deliberately in their middle leaders build stronger, more consistent and more sustainable schools.

The year-long High Performance Leadership Program is being facilitated by Karen Gately, an Australian leadership specialist who helps leaders and organisations build high-performing teams. Her practical approach emphasises developing people, building strong relationships and creating conditions for individuals and teams to thrive.

As someone passionate about professional learning, it has been genuinely rewarding to see the impact of this course. Participants consistently identified its practical, immediately applicable strategies as the most valuable part of their learning, particularly the strategies for navigating difficult conversations and giving feedback. As one participant put it, the course 'provided a wealth of practical strategies and tools that I have already been able to implement in my role'.

What stands out most is the extent to which the course has strengthened participants' confidence to address issues directly and step more fully into their leadership role. One participant reflected, 'It has given me the confidence to directly address small issues within my team,' while another noted that it 'strengthened my confidence to have challenging conversations when necessary, while ensuring these conversations remain respectful, purposeful and focused on positive outcomes'. Ultimately, the course has reshaped how participants think about themselves and leadership itself, as an ongoing process of reflection, collaboration and continuous improvement.

Harris, J., Jaremus, F., & Gore, J. (2026). Building middle leading practice through pedagogy-focused professional development. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 54(1), 71-89.

Lipscombe, K., Grice, C., Tindall-Ford, S., & De-Nobile, J. (2020). Middle leading in Australian schools: Professional standards, positions, and professional development. *School Leadership & Management*, 40(5), 406-424.

# Mentoring and accreditation

Jen Bateman

**As I reflect on my long career in education, I realise how incredibly privileged I have been. Education has been good to me and presented me with a plethora of opportunities that I have grasped enthusiastically. I have never wanted to be left behind in the ever-shifting pedagogical landscape.**

From very humble beginnings in a large comprehensive school, I soon had leadership thrust upon me and went on to lead some very successful modern languages departments. My passion for teaching and learning has always defined my practice but I had had no feedback at all on my teaching and no-one had ever been into my classroom to observe me and advise me how I could improve. This led me to consider how good practice could be shared to support colleagues to become better practitioners knowing that, without feedback, improvement is hard to achieve. Observing others and being observed are the key to keeping an open mind, purposeful reflection and a desire to improve. My current role as Teacher-Mentor fulfils that inherent interest providing me with an opportunity to contribute to my colleagues' professional learning as well as enhancing my own. The mindset of moving from expert to facilitator has been fundamental in shaping how I approach professional learning and how I support colleagues.

Professional learning has taught me many things over the years, but certain aspects remain constant. Relevance is fundamental, and it must be aligned with goal setting and supported by sustainable coaching and feedback. Every educational establishment is different and so the culture of that establishment has to be a consideration to allow colleagues to feel psychologically safe enough to take risks, to reflect honestly and to sustain a desire to improve.

The thought of any form of change to practice can be intimidating for some and so change has to be managed with empathy. Any suggestion of adopting a new strategy competes with finite time and energy and so it is critical to acknowledge workload, streamline documentation, celebrate successes and sustain motivation.

At the heart of any mentoring relationship lie the essential elements of collaboration and trust. Over the years I have learnt how to facilitate honest, professional dialogues, to listen with intent, to ask better questions, to share the mistakes I have made along the way and to construct next steps that are realistic within the constraints that colleagues may face.

Accreditation goes hand in hand with mentoring to achieve excellence as it provides a basis for ongoing growth and development with the ultimate objective of raising outcomes for student learning. The Professional Teaching Standards define the qualities of effective teaching and outline the knowledge, skills and practices expected of teachers at different stages of their career. It has been a privilege to support dozens of colleagues through the challenges that accreditation brings and I have derived great satisfaction from seeing colleagues develop into highly accomplished practitioners after beginning their education journey as graduate teachers. Their reflections on the accreditation process are very affirming.

'Having a dedicated mentor is instrumental to the accreditation process. A mentor with a wealth of experience in pedagogy and the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers can help shed conceptual light on practice, enabling us to "uncover" and "see" exemplary aspects of our own practice that we might not otherwise find remarkable. In my journey there were many times when a few words of wisdom and encouragement were exactly what I needed to persist with what can be a complex and challenging, but ultimately profoundly rewarding, process' - Lead Teacher



'Having a mentor helped me greatly by providing direction throughout the accreditation process, which was daunting at first. Accreditation is a deeply reflective and very personal journey, so having a sounding board with a wealth of experience was essential in building my confidence and offering reassurance when times were challenging' - Highly Accomplished Teacher and Professional Excellence

I look forward with optimism to strengthening my relationships with staff, relationships that are honest and open, that are collaborative and productive and which balance support and challenge. Most of all, I want to continue learning, staying curious, testing assumptions and making a significant contribution to the focus on quality teaching and learning that exemplifies Radford College.



# Performing arts

Nick Akhurst

I was recently sent an article and it was titled 'Hire a Theatre Kid!' written by Bryan deSilva. It made me think about the students I have had over the years and their contributions to school production and events and how we help create capable leaders. The performing arts at Radford is unique in that so much of it is student-led and student-created. No other activity lets them be as creative and take risks to create unique artistic endeavours and teach them management skills.

These are the characteristics of our performing arts students:

**Deadlines are non-negotiable:** An opening night is a promise that the show will go on no matter what. During COVID-19 we found a way to make sure every show was performed. Some had smaller audiences, some were streamed and one was postponed and it was performed the following year (in that case the deadline was moved, but we didn't give up; we found a way!).

**Grace under pressure:** Theatre is full of the unexpected – props break, technology fails, lines are forgotten, choreography missed and jokes just don't quite land right. Often the audience does not notice because performing arts students are the masters of improvisation. During a musical, students were warming up at the back of the T.B. Millar Hall in the carpark and the lead dancer had a fall. Appropriate first aid was applied, front of house distracted the audience with the help of the band, dancers reorganised the opening number and then each subsequent number. The show started 5 minutes late and didn't miss a beat.

**Teamwork makes the dream work:** You can't have a show or a concert without all the moving parts, all focused on one goal to entertain the audience and do the best show you possibly can. Performing arts students collaborate, communicate and support each other towards that common goal. I will never forget the student who built a prototype of the plant from *Little Shop of Horrors*. It was going to cost a lot to hire, and he said, 'I can build it.' He worked in his garage for well over 100 hours to build that plant and to this day we have loaned it out to four different schools because it was that good.

**Empathy on cue:** Performers step into a character, musicians understand the emotion behind the notes, designers understand the history of the characters and the setting. That practice of seeing another's viewpoint builds rare emotional intelligence. Everybody wants to do their best no matter what their role.

**Resilience and grit:** Auditioning and not getting the role hurts, but it helps to build resolve and leads to growth. It makes us proud to see a student who didn't get the role they wanted, go back and refine their work and try again.

**Passion and presence:** The passion students bring and the willingness to take risks and learn from their mistakes is truly inspiring. One of my most powerful memories was a Year 12 Revue in which the students wrote an original script, created original music and original songs and a unique design for the technical elements and choreography. The Year 12 Revue is wholly original and the longest-running interdisciplinary activity at Radford. It shows what our students are capable of achieving when supported and given a safe space to take risks and let their imaginations run free.

Many students have gone on to professional careers in technical theatre, acting, writing, music creating and recording and a variety of dance companies. Many still watch or participate in amateur theatre and use their skills in their everyday jobs. I can recall a Collegian who got a promotion based not on their work in the company but by demonstrating how they led a stage management team at the National Folk Festival. Trust me, engage with these students and they will show you amazing passion and skills you never knew they had.



# A Life in music

**Bronwyn Potter**

**I have been a music educator for over 30 years in both secondary and primary classrooms, in the violin studio and as a conductor of ensembles. I first came to Radford College in 2011 for a year, teaching Year 3 music. I returned in 2014 to fill a maternity leave position teaching Years 4-6 music and was fortunate to be invited to stay. Since 2019, I have taught Years 1-4 music and am also a member of the Year 3 strings teaching team.**

In July 2025, I attended the Elemental Music and Dance Pedagogy – Orff Schulwerk Annual Summer Intensive Program at the Orff Institute, Mozarteum University in Salzburg, Austria. Approximately 100 music educators from around the world, including around 20 Australians, participated in the intensive program. Classes explored contemporary approaches to elemental music pedagogy. Developed in the 1920s by composer and educator Carl Orff and his colleague Gunild Keetman, Orff Schulwerk combines music, movement, drama and speech in a developmental approach to music education. Central to the philosophy is the belief that learning should reflect a child's natural world of play, creativity and exploration.

Attending a Summer Intensive Program at the Orff Institute had been a professional goal of mine since I began my Orff Schulwerk training in the 1990s. I completed three levels of Australian certification, achieving my Level 3 qualification in 2013 just before rejoining Radford College. I am always seeking to further my knowledge, learn new ways to improve my teaching practice and inspire students with creative musical experiences. Receiving a scholarship meant that I was able to participate in the workshop with other experienced Orff Schulwerk practitioners from around the world and gave me the opportunity to learn from leading figures of the Orff Schulwerk method.

For many years, I have combined the strengths of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP), Orff Schulwerk and Kodály approaches in my teaching. One of the most valuable insights from the experience was being reminded of how strongly the Orff Schulwerk philosophy aligns with the IBPYP Framework. Both approaches emphasise inquiry, exploration and student agency. Orff Schulwerk is inherently transdisciplinary, creating meaningful connections with dance, drama, visual arts, literacy, numeracy and languages. The Summer Intensive reignited the passion that first inspired me to work with young children and reinforced the importance of curiosity, creativity and joyful learning in the classroom.

The most memorable takeaway was delivered by one of the presenters, Werner Beidinger, Professor of Elementary Music Education at Potsdam University. He told us that if a child isn't understanding a concept or beginning to master a skill, it is never them. It is always something we have not done, a step we have missed. Go back and break it down even further.

The impact of the scholarship has been immediate. I began incorporating new ideas, new music and teaching processes within days of returning to school. The experience provided practical strategies that encourage students to engage through movement, improvisation, collaboration and creative exploration, enriching their musical learning experiences. I have now added wool, chopsticks, hoops and one day, when I am courageous enough, I will also incorporate terracotta pots for students to use as they explore and experiment with various aspects of listening, performing and composing.

Completing the Program was both professionally and personally rewarding. It renewed my enthusiasm for teaching and reinforced my commitment to lifelong learning. I was able to meet like-minded and passionate educators from all around the world and share experiences, ideas and strategies. Most importantly of all, it has strengthened my desire to create engaging, meaningful and creative learning experiences for students, ensuring that music remains a place of discovery, joy and connection.

# Excellence in basketball

Ryan Kinnane

When people hear the word excellence in sport, they often think of championships, representative honours and winning records. While these achievements are certainly worth celebrating, my experience at Radford College has taught me that excellence in basketball is about something much bigger than the final score.

My journey at Radford began in 2020 as a Junior School classroom teacher, following eight years teaching in the ACT and Queensland. I was also coaching College basketball. When the opportunity arose to become Head of Basketball in 2023, I embraced it. The role provided the chance to combine two passions: working with young people and contributing to a sport that has had a significant impact on my own life.

In my first year, I took time to understand the complexities of a large school sports program, sought feedback from players, parents and coaches and identified opportunities for growth. Two priorities quickly emerged: improving communication and strengthening connections across our basketball community.

We have since worked to establish a clear purpose for Radford basketball: enriching College life and enhancing the student experience through basketball, while using the sport as a vehicle for developing character and resilience. We have expanded opportunities for students through partnerships with organisations such as NBA Basketball School Australia and the Basketball Australia Centre of Excellence, while also increasing access to tournaments, the Australian School Championships and international tours.

Clear communication, established processes and a commitment to continuous improvement have helped create an environment where students can focus on what matters most: participation, development and enjoyment of the game. The growth of the program has come from doing the small things well, consistently and working together toward a shared vision.

Underpinning all of this is a simple belief: character first, excellence follows.

We want our coaches to develop the person first, using competition and connection as vehicles for growth. We value relationships over results and understand that how we play is just as important as what we achieve. That means setting high standards while remaining compassionate. It means holding students accountable not only for their performance, but also for their behaviour. It means showing respect for teammates, coaches, officials and opponents. It means learning how to respond when things do not go according to plan.

Importantly, it also means recognising that development is rarely linear. A player can work tirelessly for weeks without seeing immediate improvement, only for something to suddenly click. The same is true in life. One of our responsibilities as coaches is to help students understand that setbacks are not failures. They are opportunities to learn, adapt and continue moving forward.

In 2025, I was honoured to receive the Basketball ACT Outstanding Service Award following a nomination from a parent within the Radford basketball community. While recognition is never the reason for doing this work, the nomination was particularly meaningful because it reflected something I value deeply: the relationships and connections built through sport.

Today, around one in five students in Years 2 to 12 participates in Radford basketball. This provides a unique opportunity to positively influence young people through sport, providing them with a safe environment in which to experience both success and disappointment. It teaches them how to persevere, support others, take responsibility and keep striving when circumstances become difficult. The lessons learned on the court often endure long after a player's final game.

Ultimately, my goal is to create meaningful experiences, foster strong relationships and help young people develop the skills, mindset and character to contribute positively beyond school.

For me, that is what excellence in basketball truly means.



Radford Collegians proudly support  
the 2026 International Women's

World Cup.  
It's an  
exciting  
opportunity  
for the  
girls to  
show  
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talent.

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# Leading early childhood education

Georgia Solomon

I commenced at Radford College in 2020 as a Year 2 classroom teacher. After six weeks, we were sent into COVID-19 lockdown, which was an interesting way to commence a new role! After a year in the classroom, the Coordinator of Student Support and Enrichment role was advertised. I was drawn to apply for this role given my previous postgraduate studies (a Master of Arts in TESOL and a Master of Education in Special Education) and previous teaching experience in leadership and learning support roles in both Australia and in Singapore.

Having held the role of Coordinator of Student Support and Enrichment for six years and working across all grades in the Junior School, I continually seek to expand my professional knowledge and improve my practice. In 2023, I completed my Highly Accomplished Teacher accreditation through TQI and was also accredited at the level of Professional Excellence through the Independent Schools of Australia. Being trained primarily as a Kindergarten to Year 6 teacher, I was looking to expand my knowledge of best practice in the early years context. It was for this reason that I applied for the Staff Scholarship to pursue a Graduate Certificate in Leading Early Childhood Education through Queensland University of Technology.

Through this Graduate Certificate, I have earned valuable professional knowledge in the domains of leadership, innovative educational approaches, neuroscience and inclusion. Key focuses of this Certificate align with my personal teaching philosophy as well: principles of distributed leadership, whereby classroom teachers are seen as experts in their field, who collaborate with others to achieve the best outcomes for their students; the importance of play in the early years; how brain development in the early years of life contributes to our youngest students' understanding of the world; and, of course, best practice in inclusive education.

Moreover, this Graduate Certificate closely supports the College's current Strategic Plan as it demonstrates the importance of holistic growth as well as academic rigour. Demonstrating that 'wisdom' is a lifelong responsibility, studying this Certificate has enabled me to be reflective about my own practice, while simultaneously displaying my lifelong curiosity.

My hope is that these new learnings will help me continue to support my colleagues to deliver the best outcomes for our students. I hope to be able to continue coaching and mentoring my colleagues around best practice in inclusive education in the Early Learning Centre.





# Cyber security

**Johno Damoulakis**

**I began my journey at Radford College in March 2017 as a casual IT Helpdesk Officer. Since then, I have been fortunate to work in a variety of roles across the College's technology team, including End User Services Supervisor, before moving into my current position as Cyber Security Officer and Systems Administrator.**

Throughout my various roles, I gained valuable experience supporting staff, students and College systems. Over time, I found myself increasingly drawn to the security side of technology. I enjoyed investigating problems, understanding how incidents occurred and looking for ways we could better protect our systems and users. Moving into cyber security gave me the opportunity to focus on those areas while continuing to build on my broader IT experience.

A significant milestone in my professional development came through the College's Staff Scholarship program, which supported me in completing a Master of Cyber Security at Charles Sturt University. The degree covered a broad range of cyber security topics, with a particular focus on areas such as security operations and incident response, both of which closely align with my role at Radford.

What appealed to me most about these areas was the combination of technical investigation, problem-solving and risk management. Cyber security is not only about implementing preventative controls; it also involves identifying suspicious activity, investigating incidents and understanding how threats can affect an organisation.

I applied for the Staff Scholarship because I wanted to continue building my career in cyber security and deepen the knowledge I had gained through practical experience. Cyber security is a rapidly changing field, and there is always something new to learn. Completing the master's degree allowed me to step beyond the day-to-day technical aspects of my role and gain a broader perspective on the technical, organisational and human dimensions of cyber security. While technology plays a critical role in preventing and detecting threats, people remain one of the most important components of any security strategy.

My final research project explored how artificial intelligence can be used to enhance social engineering techniques. The research examined how generative AI can make phishing attempts and other forms of social engineering more convincing, scalable and difficult to detect. It highlighted the growing challenges organisations face and reinforced the importance of security awareness and education.

The knowledge I gained through my studies has already influenced the way I approach cyber security at Radford. Alongside implementing technical controls, I place a strong emphasis on security awareness and helping staff understand why certain security measures are necessary. It has also encouraged me to take a broader view when responding to incidents or implementing improvements. Rather than simply asking how we can stop a particular threat, I focus on understanding how it occurred, what lessons can be learned and how technology, processes and education can work together to reduce future risks.

Looking ahead, I am excited to continue developing my career in cyber security and building on what I learned through the master's degree. Completing the qualification strengthened my interest in security operations, incident response, security strategy and the evolving role of artificial intelligence in cyber security.

Professional learning never truly stops in this field. Technology and threats continue to evolve, creating new challenges and opportunities for growth. The Staff Scholarship gave me the opportunity to invest in my development while applying much of what I was learning directly to my work at Radford. Completing my master's degree was a significant personal and professional achievement, and I am grateful to the College for supporting me on that journey.



# Telling Bishop Radford's story

**Annette Carter**

**Since joining Radford College in 2023 as the College Historian, I have helped tell the story of our community while also uncovering the history behind it. What attracted me to the historian role was the opportunity to preserve and share the College's heritage.**

Not long after I arrived at the College, I was struck by how many people knew very little about the person for whom Radford College is named. Bishop Lewis Bostock Radford was a significant figure in the development of Anglican education in Canberra, helping establish Canberra Grammar School and Canberra Girls' Grammar School. Yet beyond his name, much of his story had faded from memory.



The Staff Scholarship provided me with the opportunity to address that gap by researching and writing a new biography of Bishop Radford. While I had previously co-authored a book, this project was my first solo historical biography and involved a substantial amount of archival research, writing, editing and fact-checking.

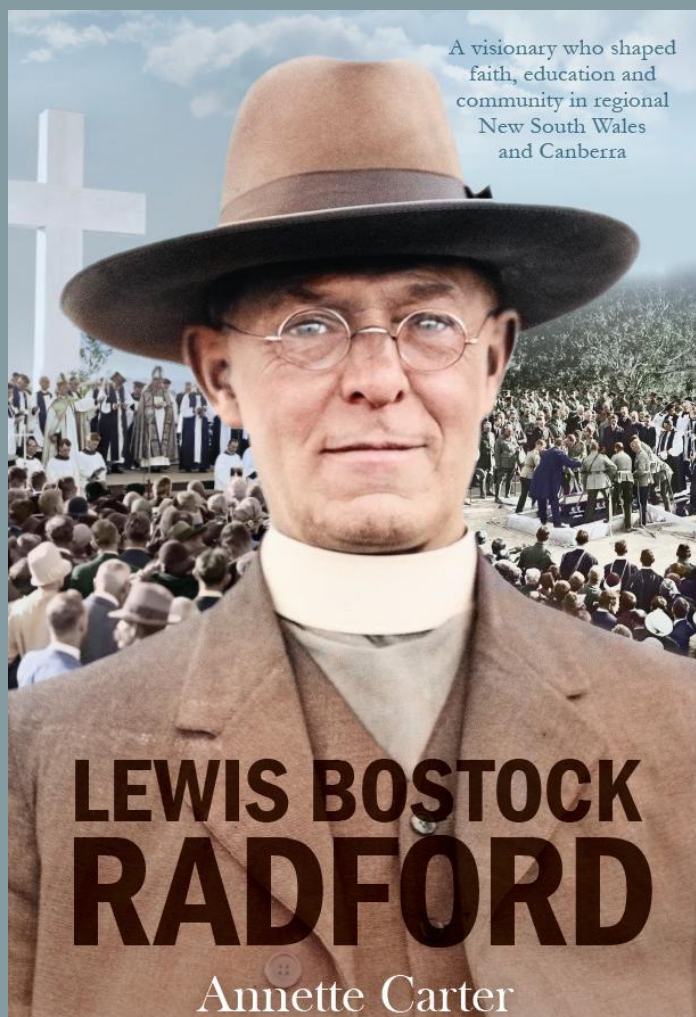
One of the reasons I applied for the scholarship was because I saw it as an opportunity to contribute something meaningful to the College community. I also wanted to challenge myself professionally and develop my skills as a researcher and writer. The scholarship gave me something that every historian values: time. Time to visit archives, examine historical documents, follow leads and piece together a story drawn from sources scattered across Australia and overseas.

One of my favourite discoveries involved an extraordinary blackmail attempt against Bishop Radford during the Great Depression. In 1931, two teenage girls travelled to Goulburn and, along with a Goulburn local, attempted to extort £100 from the Bishop by threatening to spread rumours about an impropriety to newspapers in Sydney and Melbourne. Radford immediately contacted police and a trap was set. The would-be blackmailers were arrested when they arrived to collect what they thought was the payment. The story itself was remarkable enough to make headlines across Australia and even in Britain, but what struck me most was Radford's response when the matter came before the courts. Despite being the victim, he urged the judge to show leniency to the young man involved, believing he had been influenced by others and driven largely by desperation during difficult economic times. It was a powerful reminder that the historical figures we encounter in archives are often far more complex and human than the public record suggests.

Researching the biography revealed many similar moments. Beyond the titles and achievements was a highly intelligent, determined and often misunderstood individual who also possessed humour, compassion and a genuine concern for others. Bringing these aspects of his character to light became one of the most rewarding parts of the project.

The scholarship has already influenced my work at Radford College. It has strengthened my ability to research and tell stories with greater depth, accuracy and context. It has also reinforced the importance of documenting our own history and preserving the records that will help future generations understand the people and events that shaped the College.

I feel incredibly fortunate to work at a school that values its history and invests in its staff through opportunities such as the Staff Scholarship program. The biography of Bishop Radford is the result not only of my own research but also of a culture that encourages curiosity, learning and professional growth. It has been a privilege to help tell the story of the man behind the name and, in doing so, contribute to the ongoing story of Radford College itself.



# Designing maths for variability

Sarah Box

During my almost four years at Radford College, I have taught mathematics across a range of year levels. More recently, I stepped into the role of Acting Assistant Head of Mathematics. What initially attracted me to teaching was the opportunity to make a meaningful difference in students' lives by helping them develop confidence, resilience and problem-solving skills. Over time, my focus has increasingly centred on creating learning experiences that enable all students to engage with mathematics and experience success, regardless of their starting point.

In 2025, I developed a mathematics program for students accessing a modified learning pathway. The program provides a flexible and inclusive framework that enables students to engage with mathematics at their current level of development while continuing to build essential skills and understanding. I am also currently leading the implementation of the Year 10 mathematics pathway program, a tailored course designed for students who have experienced challenges in mathematics and wish to strengthen their skills in preparation for future BSSS courses. Through these experiences, I became increasingly interested in how schools can create learning environments in which every student feels capable, supported and valued.

I applied for the Staff Scholarship to deepen my understanding of inclusive education and strengthen my ability to support the diverse range of learners in our classrooms. While educators often speak about meeting students where they are, doing so effectively requires ongoing learning, reflection and adaptation. Every classroom includes students with different strengths, interests, learning profiles and experiences. The scholarship provided an opportunity to explore practical, evidence-informed approaches that promote equitable access to learning and help remove barriers that may prevent students from reaching their potential.

The scholarship also aligned with my growing interest in Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). I am interested in how schools can establish proactive systems that identify student needs early, provide targeted support and create pathways for success. I wanted to develop a stronger understanding of inclusive practices that could inform my own teaching while also contributing to broader conversations about supporting diverse learners across the school.

As part of the scholarship, I completed the SENIA (Special Education Network and Inclusion Association) Academy Level One Educator Certification. The program focused on six key areas: understanding behaviour, learning differences and diagnosed disabilities, implementing inclusion systems, supporting the whole child, developing individualised learning plans, and Universal Design for Learning (UDL). What appealed to me most was the balance between research-informed theory and practical classroom application. Rather than focusing solely on specific diagnoses or interventions, the certification encouraged participants to think more broadly about learner variability and the systems, structures and practices that help schools create inclusive and sustainable learning environments.

One of the most valuable insights I gained was the importance of shifting from accommodation to proactive design. Traditionally, educators may identify a barrier to learning and then implement adjustments for an individual student. Through the UDL framework, I was encouraged to think differently by considering how learning experiences can be designed from the outset to meet the needs of a wide range of learners. This approach recognises that learner variability is the norm rather than the exception and promotes flexibility in teaching, assessment and classroom environments from the beginning.

The certification reinforced that inclusive practices benefit all students, not only those with identified learning needs. Strategies such as providing multiple ways for students to access information, demonstrate understanding and engage with content can have a positive impact across the classroom. Equally important is the intentional development of learning environments where students experience a sense of belonging and are encouraged to take risks in their learning. Inclusion is not about creating separate pathways for some students; it is about designing learning experiences that support everyone while maintaining high expectations.

This learning has already influenced my professional practice. I am now more intentional in identifying potential barriers to learning and considering how thoughtful planning can reduce them. In mathematics, I have become increasingly focused on providing students with multiple entry points into concepts and creating opportunities for them to engage with content in different ways. This has encouraged me to think more creatively about lesson design, assessment and student engagement while ensuring that all learners have meaningful opportunities to participate and succeed.

Looking ahead, this experience has strengthened my commitment to inclusive education and reinforced my belief that every student deserves to feel seen, valued and capable of success. It has also inspired me to continue exploring how schools can strengthen MTSS through strong universal teaching practices, targeted interventions and data-informed decision-making. The SENIA certification has provided a valuable foundation for this work and encouraged ongoing reflection on my professional practice. Most importantly, it has reminded me that professional growth is a continual journey. There is always more to learn, and each new learning opportunity provides fresh insights that ultimately benefit our students. I am grateful for the opportunity provided through the Staff Scholarship and look forward to continuing to apply and share this learning in support of inclusive, effective and equitable education for all learners.





# Brain science and the future of learning

Jason Golding

In 2024–25, Radford College undertook a significant review of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. This work coincided with my acting role as Assistant Principal of Curriculum and enabled my participation in the Science of Learning conference in New York. This event brings together leading experts in brain science and educational research, offering educators access to the latest findings on how humans learn. The experience provided valuable insight into our own curriculum renewal and affirmed the importance of grounding educational practice in scientific evidence.

My aim is to understand how learning occurs so that we can optimise students' future learning capacity. In an era defined by instant information, rapid data processing and limitless digital memory, the human ability to think critically, evaluate information and apply knowledge flexibly is more essential than ever. Teaching students *how* to learn, not just *what* to learn, is central to preparing them for a world where information is abundant but understanding is invaluable.

**The Social Brain** - One of the most influential concepts I encountered at the conference was Dr Patricia K. Kuhl's research into the Social Brain. Her work demonstrates that humans are biologically wired to learn through social interaction. Kuhl's findings are striking. A teacher delivering a lesson via video already loses measurable impact compared with in-person teaching. Even more remarkable is that the mere presence of another learner, even without direct interaction, increases learning capacity and retention. Screens, despite their ability to capture attention, produce weaker learning outcomes. Her research also confirms what educators worldwide suspected after the COVID-19 lockdowns: learning declined not simply because schooling was disrupted, but because adolescents were deprived of in-person social interaction. Scientists can now observe reduced cortical thickness in adolescent brains, which is essentially an accelerated ageing effect, caused not by the virus, but by isolation. This deterioration has profound implications for how we understand the role of schools and the necessity of human connection in learning.

**Sharing the science with students** - The Social Brain was one of the first concepts I shared with our Year 7–12 students, just before senior students entered their semester exams. It is vital that students understand that learning is not a solitary endeavour. Asking questions, discussing ideas and engaging with teachers and peers strengthens understanding and retention. While collaboration can introduce distractions, the presence of another human, especially an engaged co-learner or expert, measurably enhances learning. Helping students recognise this empowers them to use social interaction as a deliberate learning strategy.

**Implications for teaching and assessment** - Kuhl's research is both reassuring and energising. It highlights the extraordinary power that exists in our classrooms when social learning is intentionally harnessed. Learning capacity is at its highest when students engage in active, purposeful, collaborative environments. This aligns strongly with the practical, evidence-based work of Dr Dylan Wiliam, whose insights into formative assessment and cognitive load have also shaped my teaching and leadership. Wiliam's work emphasises that learning improves when teachers and students gather timely information about student understanding to adjust instruction. Sharing this learning with colleagues across departments has been an exciting step toward ensuring learning excellence is within reach for all students.

**Achievement, motivation and the path to excellence** - Another key takeaway from the conference came from Dr Karl Hendrick's research into the myths surrounding the relationship between achievement and motivation. His work challenges the common assumption that motivation must come first. Instead, Hendrick demonstrates that achievement fuels motivation. When students experience success, even small, incremental success, their confidence grows, and they become more willing to take on challenging learning goals. This shift in understanding has been transformative as we support students in building confidence and striving towards achievable milestones on the path to excellence.



# Building leadership in human resources

Maddie Looker

Since joining Radford College in January 2022, I have had the opportunity to grow professionally alongside an organisation that genuinely values learning and continuous improvement. As Assistant Head of Human Resources, I support the College's people strategy while working closely with leaders and staff across a wide range of human resources initiatives, including recruitment, employee relations, Enterprise Agreement interpretation and application, contract management, and onboarding and offboarding. Being part of a small team that manages the depth and breadth of human resources functions has been valuable for my career development.

What first attracted me to human resources as a profession was the opportunity to make a meaningful contribution in a role that combines problem-solving with supporting people. Being part of a community that is committed to excellence, collaboration and the wellbeing of its entire community is incredibly rewarding.

I was privileged to be awarded a Staff Scholarship to undertake a Double Diploma of Human Resource Management and Leadership and Management. The experience has already been invaluable and continues to enhance my professional development as I work towards completing both qualifications.

I saw the scholarship as an opportunity to complement my practical experience with formal study. Whilst much of my professional development has come through hands-on experience, the qualifications have allowed me to explore the theory that underpins many aspects of my role and consider contemporary approaches to leadership and human resources practice.

The diplomas cover a broad range of topics including strategic workforce planning, employee and industrial relations, recruitment and selection, leadership, communication, change management, and organisational development. What I have enjoyed most is the way the coursework encourages critical thinking and reflection, reinforcing existing knowledge while introducing new perspectives that are directly relevant to my role at the College.

Human resources is often fast-paced and operational, but the scholarship has reinforced how thoughtful planning, evidence-based decision-making and strong leadership contribute to positive organisational outcomes. It has also highlighted that effective leadership is as much about building trust, influencing others and fostering collaboration as it is about managing people.

I have found myself approaching familiar challenges with fresh perspectives. The learning has encouraged me to reflect on existing practices, consider opportunities for continuous improvement and further strengthen the advice and support I provide across the College.

Looking ahead, I am excited to complete both qualifications and continue my career in human resources. I am incredibly grateful to Radford College for investing in my professional development through the Staff Scholarship and for fostering a culture that values learning, curiosity and personal excellence. The scholarship has strengthened my passion for the profession and has given me greater confidence in contributing strategically to the College, whilst developing as a leader. I look forward to continuing to contribute to a positive workplace culture where people are known and encouraged to thrive.

# Leadership in Japanese education

Di Fitzpatrick

**Twenty years ago, I walked through the gates of Radford College as a new Japanese teacher. Looking back, I could never have imagined the opportunities, challenges and relationships that would shape the next two decades of my professional life.**

My journey began much earlier as a Rotary exchange student in Japan. This was well before electronic dictionaries, Google Translate and instant online resources. As the only foreign student in a small rural town, I was immersed in Japanese language and culture in a way that challenged and inspired me. That experience sparked a lifelong passion for Japan and ultimately led me to complete a Bachelor of Arts in Languages at the University of Canberra. Coming from a family of teachers, education was always part of my story. I later completed a Diploma of Secondary Education through the University of Southern Queensland and began my teaching career.

Over the years, the way we teach and learn languages has changed dramatically. When I first began teaching Japanese, lessons relied heavily on textbooks, cassette tapes and photocopied worksheets. Today, students have access to authentic Japanese content, podcasts, digital learning platforms and direct connections with native speakers. These changes have challenged me to continually adapt and grow as an educator.

Beyond technology, I have seen significant changes in education as a whole. New initiatives, research and teaching approaches continually influence classroom practice, and at times it feels as though education moves in cycles, with old ideas returning alongside new ones. Despite these changes, my core belief has remained constant: education is about helping each individual child reach their potential. It takes a whole community to nurture young people, including families, schools and the wider community. Teachers have the privilege of walking alongside students during an important part of that journey.

There have been many highlights throughout my time at Radford. Among the most significant have been helping to establish relationships with our sister schools in Japan, creating exchange opportunities that have broadened students' horizons and deepened their cultural understanding. I have also had the privilege of leading numerous educational tours to Japan and seeing students develop confidence, independence and a genuine appreciation for another culture.

Beyond the language classroom, I have enjoyed contributing to the wider life of the College. These opportunities have included serving as the Head of girls' soccer, leading a memorable soccer tour to England, mentoring Year 11 and 12 students, and leading the languages department for more than ten years.

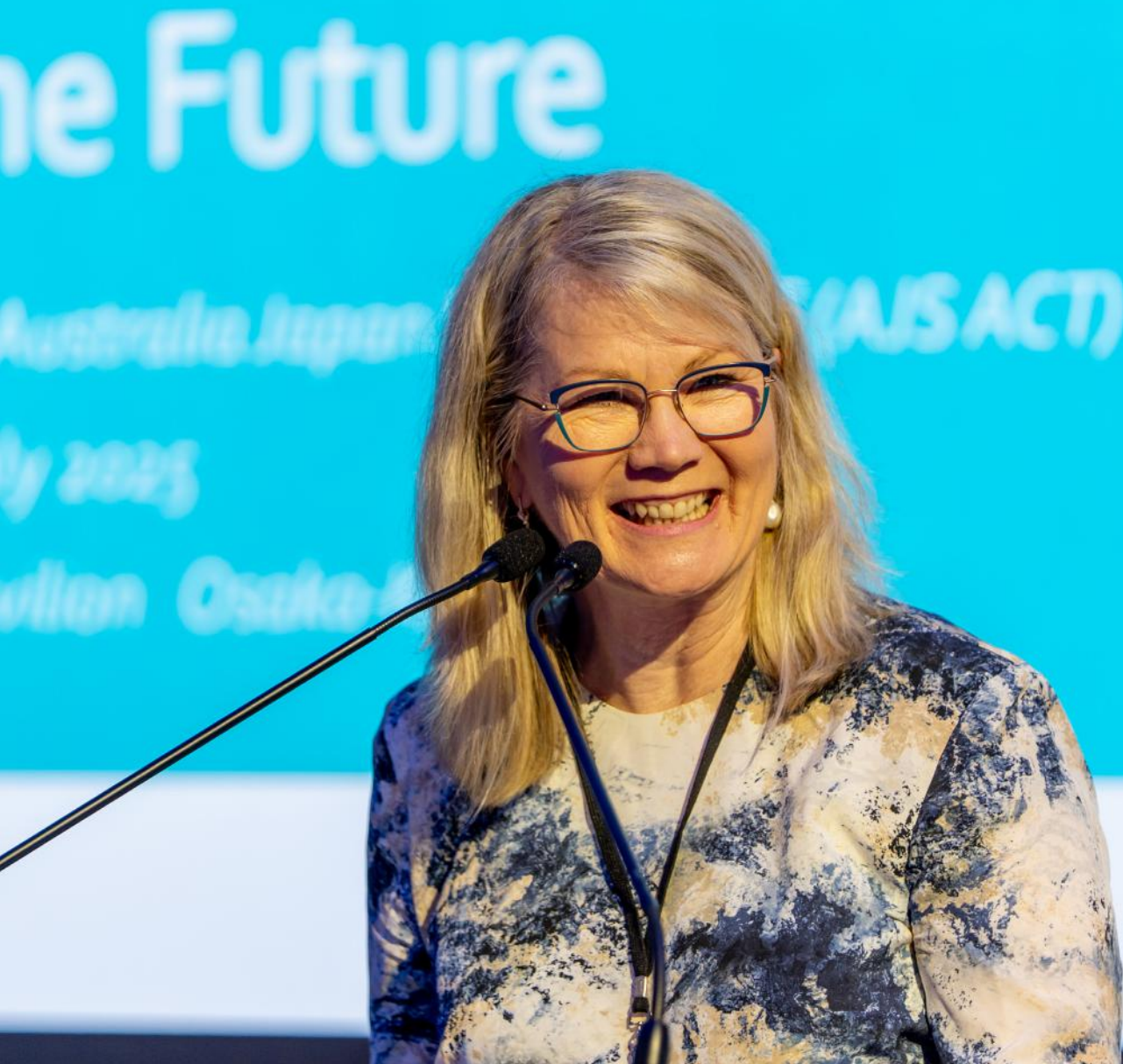
Professional learning has also been an important part of my journey. I have worked with the Board of Senior Secondary Studies to help develop ACT language curricula, completed a Graduate Diploma in International Baccalaureate Education in preparation for the introduction of the IB at Radford, and later undertook a Graduate Diploma in Intercultural Pedagogy through Macquarie University to further strengthen my teaching practice. In 2025, I had the opportunity, with colleagues from Namadgi High School, to present an educational forum at the World Expo in Osaka.

I am also proud of Radford's involvement in hosting participants in the Australia-Japan Society of Canberra's Tohoku Program for over a decade. This initiative, which came out of the 2011 Great East Earthquake and Tsunami, has strengthened connections between our communities and provided valuable cultural experiences for students and visitors alike.

While these milestones are important, without question the greatest privilege of being a teacher, and particularly a teacher at Radford College, has been working with the students.

I love being in the classroom. I love teaching Japanese and sharing both the language and culture of Japan. The enthusiasm, curiosity and individuality of students continue to inspire me every day. It has been especially rewarding to see former students pursue further study,





careers and opportunities connected to Japan. Just as importantly, I have learnt so much from the students themselves through the countless conversations, challenges and moments of growth we have shared over the years.

I have also been fortunate to work alongside talented teachers in the languages department, dedicated teachers across the College and supportive families. I am particularly grateful to the many Radford families who have welcomed exchange students, Tohoku Program participants and language assistants into their homes. Their generosity reflects the special spirit of the Radford community.

Radford has also supported my involvement beyond the College, including my work with the Australia Japan Society of Canberra, the ACT Government's Sister City Committee and, more recently, as Acting President of the National Federation of Australia-Japan Societies. These roles have allowed me to continue building connections between Australia and Japan, something that has been a central theme throughout my career.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Basic Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between Australia and Japan. While such agreements are established by governments, it is the people-to-people connections that truly bring them to life. I was deeply honoured this year to receive a Foreign Minister's Commendation from Japan in recognition of my contributions to strengthening Australia-Japan relations. I regard this award not only as a personal honour, but also as a reflection of the many opportunities I have had through both my professional work at Radford and my volunteer involvement in the wider community.

While much has changed since I first walked through the College gates 20 years ago, my appreciation for this remarkable community remains unchanged. Thank you to the students, families, colleagues and friends who have been part of this journey. It has been a privilege to contribute to the education and growth of so many young people. The relationships, opportunities and shared experiences have shaped both my professional and personal life, and I will always treasure my time at Radford College.

Thank you, Radford, for an incredible 20 years.

# Out standing in their field

Ben Tonkin

When I joined Radford College in the 2000s, many of the features that make the campus recognisable today existed only on plans and in conversations. Much of the sporting facilities, gardens, shaded courtyards and gathering spaces were largely aspirations rather than realities.

Armed with plenty of enthusiasm and determination, my colleague and I faced the challenge of looking after 18.59 hectares of land. The scale was significant: more than three hectares of sports fields, extensive lawns, ornamental gardens and areas that were undeveloped.

The work was about creating an environment that would support learning, connection and community. Every fence erected, tree planted, trench dug, field marked and garden established contributed to something more significant. It soon became clear that the task required more than two people. The team grew and new equipment arrived. Together we planned, planted, built, repaired, landscaped and maintained a campus that evolved year after year. As the grounds transformed, so too did the College.



Twenty-plus years later, standing on the same 18.59 hectares, it is remarkable to reflect on how far both the College and its grounds have come. For a Grounds Manager, there are many professional achievements to be proud of. Yet the greatest achievement is not a garden, sports field or building project. It is the team. Behind every well-presented field, every thriving garden and every safe, welcoming outdoor space is a committed group of grounds professionals who take enormous pride in their work.

Sure, the going can get tough at times, but our work helps ensure a cricket match proceeds after difficult weather. It allows a football game to go ahead when conditions are challenging. It provides shaded spaces for outdoor learning, courtyards for students to gather and landscapes that enrich the daily experience of everyone on campus. When challenges arise, the team takes on the task, whether that involves preparing sports fields, pruning trees, repairing irrigation or keeping pathways safe and presentable.

As one respected industry leader observed, 'We may not always win the beauty contest, nonetheless the show will go on.' That sentiment resonates strongly and the work is all undertaken by this dedicated 'motley crew'. Perhaps we are unsung heroes (honestly that is how we like it), but we have an immense passion for our trade, an awareness of the greater purpose and a sheer respect for continued learning.





# Gifted education

Angelina Browning

Gifted education has something of a public relations problem. People often imagine elite programs, academic competition and a disproportionate focus on students who are already destined for success. For many, education feels inherently egalitarian. Yet, the reality for our high-potential learners is far more nuanced and far more interesting. Studying gifted education has challenged many of my assumptions about achievement and equity, while also reinforcing the vital role schools play in helping young people develop their talents. Completing a Graduate Certificate in Gifted Education at UNSW has offered a timely new perspective as Radford looks to further strengthen its focus on high-potential learners.

One of the reasons that I love working at Radford is that our school is focused on holistic education. We value academic excellence, but we also value each individual's character, values and broader goals. For that reason, it is important to state from the outset that gifted education is about equity, not elitism. Its focus extends beyond simply developing academic excellence. True equity means ensuring that every student, regardless of their starting point, is challenged and supported appropriately. I believe young people develop resilience by facing challenge rather than shying away from it. The necessity of resilience is evident in the experience of many gifted young people once they leave school and are presented with genuine academic challenge for the first time. Those who have coasted through secondary education and have not yet developed an appropriate toolbox are left floundering (Raoof et al., 2024). It is our responsibility as a College to support all our students to develop the necessary skills to flourish well beyond their schooling, not only in their time with us.

In essence, giftedness relates to potential, but it does not guarantee success. Perhaps the most important concept I have encountered is the distinction between giftedness and talent as well as the recognition that having high potential does not automatically lead to high achievement. Like all students, gifted learners need guidance, challenge and opportunity if their abilities are to develop fully. When grappling with these concepts and developing policies, most Australian jurisdictions and schools draw upon Gagné's Differentiated Model for Giftedness and Talent (Gagné, 2021). In this model, Gagné outlines the environmental and intrapersonal factors that contribute to talent development as well as varied aspects of the developmental process. Importantly, talent development relates to all students – whatever their starting point – and I am heartened to see that many of the conditions associated with effective gifted education already exist at Radford. Our culture of professional learning and commitment to holistic student growth place us in a strong position as we continue to develop opportunities for high-potential learners.

I have also been struck by research showing that gifted students value the relational qualities of teachers just as much as their subject expertise (Hébert, 2021). We may expect academically talented young people to care only about intellectual stimulation. However, when surveyed, they consistently report that they want to know their teachers value and like them. This reinforces that highly able learners are still young people who need encouragement, a sense of belonging and support. They are, like their peers, wrestling with their place in the world and an increasingly unfamiliar future.

In this regard, my studies have reinforced what many of us already know about excellent teaching: rigorous learning flourishes alongside strong relationships. This combination of high expectations and genuine care is one of Radford's great strengths, and it positions us well to support gifted learners as they develop the knowledge, character and resilience needed to thrive beyond school.

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# Long-standing staff

Radford College is proud to have many long-standing staff members who have dedicated years, and in some cases decades, to shaping the College community. Their experience fosters a sense of continuity and trust within the College and the wider community, where they contribute to a supportive and caring culture.

## 40+ years

Boyd Gibson

## 30+ years

Dylan Mordike  
Jason Golding

## 20+ years

Di Lefebvre  
Paul Tosic  
Tim Minehan  
Nick Akhurst  
Nerys Knoke  
Nicole Barrett  
Louise Wallace-Richards  
Susan Davenport

Ben Tonkin  
Andrew Barber  
Di Fitzpatrick  
Jen Bateman  
Tim Robards  
Michele Sharp  
Kath Notley

## 10+ years

Kirsten Knight  
Beth Maggs  
Susan Garman  
Dean O'Brien  
Sue Hassall  
Jennifer Bell  
Rachelle Hayward  
Tina Crane  
Tracey Markovic  
Emily Begbie  
Linda Oakman  
Ben Marston  
Angie Walters  
Judy Geeves  
Stephanie Bullock  
Ros Barlow  
Caroline Suthers  
Mary Willett  
Florin Suciu

Donna Robards  
Samara Halagy  
Karen Mahar  
Candy Potter  
Brad Davis  
Sam Tonkin  
Adrian Cattanach  
Nerida Dyne  
Jane Lilley  
Lisa Baker  
Stuart Mitchell  
Paul England  
Cathy Jackson  
Alyssa Maier  
Alison Steven  
Sam Lonsdale  
Jonathon Craddock  
Dominic Cattoi  
Brett Lamson

Bronwyn Potter  
Dimity Kidston  
Debbie Banks  
Mackenzie Perfect  
Stuart Sampson  
Jared Cox  
Tracy Kelly  
Gemma Wilson  
Rachel Song  
Jane Smith  
Jeremy Hawkes  
Nadia Trewin  
Sally Stenning  
Rebecca Hunter  
Rowena Stevens  
Janine Crookes  
Johnno Damoulakis  
Megan Sharp



Sue Hassall receiving a medal for her contribution to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award from His Excellency, General the Honourable David John Hurley AC CVO DSC (Retd)



# Remembering Kate's colourful legacy

We were fortunate to have Kate as our very own Atelierista in the Early Learning Centre since 2021 – a rare and specialised educator who brought together art, imagination and learning in extraordinary ways. Inspired by the world-renowned Reggio Emilia approach, Kate encouraged countless students to explore, create, wonder and express themselves through art.

Kate came to Radford after a successful career designing, creating and painting in fashion and textile design studios, as well as operating her own commercial art studio in Sydney. Wanting to share her love of art with children, she transitioned into early childhood education before joining the College.

Kate once reflected: 'From the moment I walked into the Reggio Emilia-inspired, purpose-built space, I knew it was somewhere I would love to work.'

She believed deeply in every child's capacity for creativity and self-expression. 'Every child is an artist,' she said. 'I focus on what each child can do, rather than what they can't.'

Kate's work was guided by the Reggio Emilia philosophy and the belief in the Hundred Languages of Children – the many ways children express their thoughts, feelings and ideas. Through thoughtful provocations, rich learning experiences and meaningful relationships, she helped children discover new ways of seeing and understanding the world around them.

Kate was committed to continually deepening her understanding of children's learning and creativity. Earlier this year, she travelled to Italy on a Radford Staff Scholarship to undertake a 10-day Reggio Emilia study tour in the birthplace of the philosophy that shaped her practice.

When asked what she loved most about her role, her answer reflected the enthusiasm and generosity she brought every day: 'I love seeing the joy and excitement when children discover, engage and play with materials and provocations – their genuine delight as they create and explore, often in wonderfully chaotic ways. Sharing their successes and stories and listening to their reflections on what they might do differently next time are all experiences that make for a great day.'

That joy was evident to everyone who knew her.

Kate's influence can still be seen throughout the Early Learning Centre in the creative spaces she helped shape, the projects she inspired and, most importantly, in the confidence, curiosity and sense of wonder she nurtured among generations of young learners.

She will be remembered as a gifted educator, artist, mentor and colleague whose warmth, kindness and creativity enriched our community. Kate's legacy will live on in the countless children she encouraged to imagine, create and see the world with wonder.



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