

2009 Education Guide



'Extras' seal the deal

By SAM WHITE

THESE days there are more and more extra-curricular activities offered at boarding schools across the State.

Tara Anglican Girls School registrar, Kath Marshall, Parramatta, said the all-girls school introduced rowing about five years ago and it caught on like wildfire.

She said the girls at the school were very driven, having to get out of bed for a 4am start to participate.

"Even the day girls temporarily board at the school the night before they row so they are able to leave with the boarders in the morning," she said.

Mrs Marshall said she thought the girls liked the sport because there were no specifications.

"You don't have to be a certain weight or strength to do it - it's open to everyone."

Another point she drew upon was the sense of camaraderie they got when rowing together.

The girls were offered rowing camps and competitions, which she said they all jumped at.

"They form close bonds while they are working together and it gives them a sense of achievement."

The girls are put in teams that have a

mix of girls from the lower years to the higher ones, she said.

"There is no getting in the boat and feeling like you can't do it because if one person isn't rowing the whole team is affected, so they all have to work together and push each other along," Mrs Marshall said.

"It's very healthy for them."

Mrs Marshall said from a staff point of view it was a fantastic thing for them to be involved in and strengthened the school's team spirit.

She said another popular choice at her school was the performing arts section.

"They really get involved in the musicals and plays offered to them," Mrs Marshall said.

"They enjoy putting on a production and learn a new skill."

She said the beauty of Tara was they offered long-term and short-term boarding which meant all girls at the school could get involved in many of the choices available.

"If a girl becomes heavily involved in swimming or athletics, for example, they are able to stay on site to help them with their training," she said.

The boarders in particular take their sports and activities very seriously.

Mrs Marshall said it was because at every inter-house function they held a "boarders versus day girls" competition.

She said the students at Tara came from across regional NSW as well as the city.

Southern Highlands girls' school principal, Julie Gillick of Frensham, based in Mittagong, said the students at her school were heavily involved in music and the performing arts.

She said the girls were quite involved with the community.

About 100 girls visit nursing homes each week, and others work with the local council to try and improve the quality of the river that runs through their school.

"We have been involved with the community for about the past 10 years," Mrs Gillick said.

"We are on a 300-acre block so we have also been working to regenerate the bushland on the property."

She said they had terrific sports grounds for the girls to train and compete on because of the school's land.

"Even though we are out of Sydney we are still able to play in the same sports circuit as the Sydney schools," Mrs Gillick said.

She said the school didn't have a favoured activity all students participated in, as at Frensham they were encouraged to join in with whatever activities they felt passionate about.

All about character

THE Scots School, Bathurst prides itself on students' achievements both in and out of the classroom.

Deputy head, Lynne Fleming, said it was proud of its pipe band, which boasted 20 to 30 students at any one time.

"Last year we sent students to the world band championships in Scotland and this year we have had children representing at the Australian championships," she said.

The school also has several musical ensembles, a concert band, a string ensemble and junior and senior choirs.

"Another aspect of our school that is very important to us is the cadet program we have and the Duke of Edinburgh scheme," Mrs Fleming said.

She said the extra-curricular program built character.

"It allows each child to discover their own passions, their own excellence."

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St Margaret's Anglican Girls School
11 Petrie Street, Ascot Qld 4007
Phone: +61 7 3862 0777

CRICOS Code: 00511K

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