



WILDERNESS SCHOOL





LIFE AT
WILDERNESS



WILDERNESS
SCHOOL
ALWAYS True

It is our understanding of girls, of how they learn best and our commitment to all of our students as individuals that sets Wilderness apart.

As parents, we make decisions every day for our children.

Of these, few are more important or more daunting than choosing the right school.

Will one school favour athletes or astronauts or artists? How can we choose now when those talents are yet to emerge? Should we base our decision purely on academic results or on the people those students become? What constitutes 'a good education' in a rapidly changing society?

In the end, what we want for our children is more complex than achieving 'straight As' and getting a 'good job'. We want them to develop self confidence and resilience; to find joy in life; to become independent, but feel connected to others; to have a love of

learning; to welcome responsibility; to find their own talents and take them as far as they can; to set goals and strive to achieve them; to be self directed and to accommodate change; to develop friendships and to feel loved and respected.

We want them to become their very best.

Since its establishment in 1884, Wilderness School has been at the forefront of girls' education. A non-denominational school for girls from ELC to Year 12, Wilderness School understands the needs of individuals.

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FAMILY LIFE

From the very beginning Wilderness has been a family school.

In 1884, Miss Margaret Brown began teaching her young sister, Mamie, and three family friends. As the number of pupils and the school grew, the four Brown sisters created an environment that welcomed everyone and created a place where students could be nurtured and directed in their intellectual and spiritual growth and prepared for all that might follow in their adult lives. The school became a unique educational institution committed to encouraging girls in mathematics and science as well as the liberal arts.

More than a century on, we remain true to our beginning. The School has continued to be at the forefront of education, constantly striving to incorporate best practices, creativity and innovation in our teaching methodologies. At the heart of our teaching is a commitment to the emotional and intellectual care of each individual girl and her unique abilities.

Wilderness is a school for all kinds of girls with all kinds of needs. We believe that everyone has unique potential and that our purpose is to help each girl to realise her gifts.



VALUES FOR LIFE



We believe that everyone has unique potential and that our purpose is to help each girl to realise her potential.

At Wilderness, we are committed to being true to the vision of the founders, the Misses Brown, and are guided by their motto 'Semper Verus', "Always True". They founded this school on their belief in the need for unlimited kindness in relationships, joy in learning and academic adventure, a spirit of humility and the balance between seeking individual excellence and success and generous service to the community. These values still guide us today.

At Wilderness School we promote, enable and nurture: -

ADVENTUROUS LEARNING:

healthy, creative, independent and cooperative learners who are seekers of excellence and success;

RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP:

responsible, tolerant and generous global citizens and leaders, who act with integrity for a socially just world, and a sustainable future for the Earth;


RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS:

compassion and kindness, hospitality and friendliness;

A TRUE AND COURAGEOUS SELF:

resilient, vibrant and spiritually aware girls, confident in themselves and appreciative of others.

Step in to any Wilderness classroom, from our ELC to Year 12, and you'll see our values not only written on our walls, but in the choices and actions of our girls and our staff. They guide every part of our culture, our relationships, our teaching and learning programs and our daily practices. They underpin the decisions that we make and how we judge our success.



The earlier that your daughter begins to learn how to think and explore the wealth of learning opportunities available to her, the earlier she is able to realise her true potential, build confidence, discover her “self” and ignite her love of learning.

LEARNING FOR LIFE

The Junior School



The Junior School provides an optimal learning environment for young girls. It is an environment which is thought provoking, supportive and challenging where girls build resilience and collaborate with others. Through active inquiry, authentic problem solving, reflection and critical and creative questioning, our girls are happy and productive citizens of their world.

Our core curriculum of English, Mathematics, Science, Design and Technology, Information Communication Technology, History, Philosophy and Thinking and Learning is enriched by specialist teachers who deliver programs in Art, Chinese, Drama, French, Guided Inquiry, Library Literature, Music and Physical Education.

For optimal engagement, it is important that your daughter's education is tailored to her needs. That is why Personalised Learning is a major focus at the School. Individual Learning Targets are developed for each girl and all girls work towards achieving specific targets which are continually reviewed and assessed in consultation with the class teacher. We believe that powerful learning occurs when your daughter's individual needs, interests and abilities are acknowledged and catered for within a respectful and supportive environment. Our Individual Learning Targets allow teachers to track individual progress and identify students who are eligible for extension and support programs.

Teachers, students and parents work in partnership with Learning Support and Extended Curriculum specialist staff to develop plans and programs for students where further differentiation is required.

Wilderness Junior School is an energetic community with many co-curricular opportunities such as Debating, Choir, Orchestra, Tournament of Minds, Performing Arts Academy and Chess are offered alongside a large number of sporting clubs. This enriched program means there are many places to "belong" and develop a sense of self. Other experiences include concerts, performances, competitions, assemblies, excursions and the Wilderness School Outdoor Education Camps Program. Through these opportunities girls are encouraged to communicate with clarity and precision, take responsible risks and respond to new challenges.

LEARNING FOR LIFE

The Middle School

Wilderness Middle School is home to girls from Years 7 to 9. Throughout their years in the Middle School, the girls have an opportunity to engage in a broad and challenging curriculum, to develop a strong sense of self, to build real and lasting friendships and to broaden their lens to include a wider and global community.

The Wilderness Middle School provides girls with a balance of learning challenges and academic rigour alongside many opportunities to experience success. We make it possible for girls to set high personal expectations for excellence in all curriculum areas by providing relevant learning extension and support and highly specialised teachers. The core curriculum in the Middle School is underpinned by learning that fosters positive dispositions, critical inquiry and creative thinking.

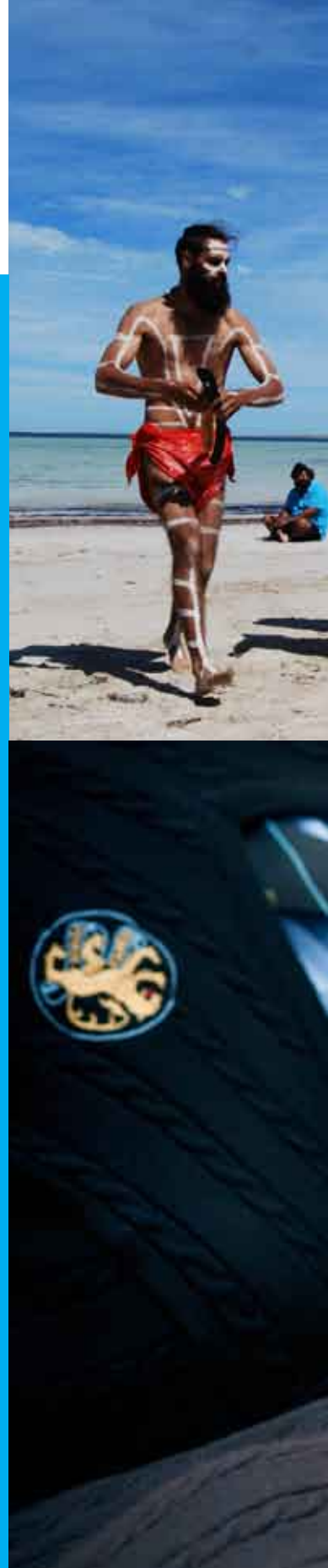
A core element of Middle Schooling is the personal, emotional and social development of students. At Wilderness we provide girls with opportunities to discover and pursue their passions and to develop their optimism and resilience. Girls are encouraged to take responsible risks with their learning and to respond constructively in the supportive school environment. They work closely with teachers and other students across the school to develop their social competence and nurture their relationships.

Responding as a member of a wider community is an important aspect of the Wilderness Middle School. Girls have many opportunities to be active in the local, national and global community. This is facilitated by the use of digital technologies to allow our girls to develop a sense of global citizenship and to study 'with' the world as well as about the world.

REALISE PROGRAM

Year 9 girls at Wilderness all benefit from the Realise program, a 3 week off campus learning experience on the Yorke Peninsula. Wilderness has developed this program for girls to build on the foundation of skills and values that they have gained from their families and from their time in the Middle School. They are able to apply their understanding of the curriculum in an authentic setting and put into practice lifelong skills that will carry them through to the Senior School and to adulthood.

Realise provides girls with the opportunity to recognise the person that they want to become, to face challenges with courage and resilience, to make a difference in the lives of others and to build connections with a range of communities.





“Realise changed me and the way I thought about things in many ways. I feel more confident about expressing my opinion when faced with challenges. I feel more passionately about the environment and being in such a beautiful place makes me question how I treat and appreciate it.”

Year 9 student



LEARNING FOR LIFE

The Senior School



At Wilderness, we help your daughter to acquire the skills and personal attributes that put her in charge of her future so that when she leaves us she has genuine choices available to her.





The Wilderness Senior School experience offers your daughter the opportunity to be true and courageous and gives her the freedom to pursue her own destiny with clarity, purpose and resilience.

Girls commence the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) in Year 10. The Senior School curriculum is broad, enabling girls to test themselves in a range of subjects before the inevitable refinement of choice at Year 12. A wide range of Vocational Education and Training (VET) subjects is offered from Year 10 giving girls the chance to enrich their school experience and to experience the world of work. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and to know themselves as learners.

The Wilderness value of Adventurous Learning fits well with our expectation that the girls will take risks, test themselves, learn to think rationally and creatively, be problem solvers and know how to retrieve, evaluate and manage information. In order to prepare them for a world in which change is constant, it is vital that our girls learn the skills and dispositions to become lifelong learners.

Our understanding of how girls learn and our commitment to personalised learning enable us to employ the most appropriate teaching methodologies.

Our highly competent teachers know the girls as individuals and walk alongside them as they learn. The combination of hardworking students and excellent teaching consistently produces outstanding results. Our Careers Counsellor works closely with Senior School girls to assist them to make appropriate subject choices and to navigate their way successfully from school to university, TAFE or work. The SACE qualifies girls for tertiary entrance anywhere in the world. Wilderness girls successfully enter diverse fields of further education and career pathways and their consistent academic achievements continue to be one of the hallmarks of our School.

LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM/CO-CURRICULAR

The academic curriculum is at the heart of our daily activities but life at Wilderness offers much more.

The extensive co curriculum is vital because of the enrichment that it offers to our girls. It allows them to pursue interests and skills beyond the classroom and to engage in a wide variety of activities in which they may find new interests and strengths, broaden their friendships and set and achieve goals.

These are, of course, all additions to the curriculum, which offer a wide range of opportunities both within and outside the classroom. Lunchtime clubs caters for interests as diverse as chess, writing, the environment, debating, junior theatre, private music lessons, music ensembles, community service and the Artist in Residence program.

Our extensive Sports program also provides opportunities for personal development. We encourage every girl to participate at a level appropriate to her ability and to be able to evaluate her performance both at a personal and team level. Sport allows our students, whether Captain or team player, to develop qualities of commitment, team work and competitiveness as well as a positive attitude to personal fitness.

The broad co curriculum program enhances educational possibilities for all girls and enriches the community life of the School.

LEADERSHIP

At Wilderness we prepare your daughter for the leadership challenges that she will face in life. She will be encouraged to take up leadership roles throughout her time here. Formal student leadership is offered through class representation, the House system and student committees in the Junior, Middle and Senior Schools.

Every girl benefits from the experience of being in a leadership position whether the role is formally recognised or simply leading a discussion group in class. When girls lead they are also developing their self confidence and decision making skills, improving public speaking, learning how to win and lose with grace and acquiring the skills of negotiation and teamwork, qualities considered essential for successful participation in the 21st century.

Learning to lead is integral to a Wilderness education preparing girls for full participation as responsible citizens in an increasingly globalised society. Our hope is that all our students will have the personal attributes to lead at any level, both wisely and with compassion.





OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIFE



One of the special aspects of a Wilderness education is the sense of belonging that girls experience. Ours is a community where teachers, girls and families work together and value each other.

Our school values are complemented by a strong pastoral care program throughout the school.

The House system is central to the pastoral care of our girls. The Head of House is responsible for the well being of the girls in House throughout their time at Wilderness and beyond. The vertical House structure further strengthens the pastoral links that exist between older and younger students.

Girls are relational, collaborative and inherently prone to service. Girls get involved, they want to help, they want to connect to others. What does this mean for Wilderness girls? As a girls school, we believe our girls have a responsibility to do what they can to help other girls all over the world.

All our students take part in our **Community Service Program**. Girls are not only encouraged to feel connected to their immediate community but we believe it is also important for our students to feel a part of, and a responsibility towards, the greater community. It is important for them to broaden their horizons.

The Wilderness School **Service Learning Program** is designed to raise awareness of environmental issues and to develop a knowledge of, and empathy for, the inequalities that exist within our local, national and global communities and through these experiences inspire our girls to create a more just, sustainable and peaceful world.

The Service Learning Program encompasses the heart, hands, heads — it is about raising funds, providing advocacy and getting out into our community to provide practical opportunities for the girls to develop a much greater sense of empathy for humanitarian and global issues.

Our girls learn that they are citizens of the world. The many international experiences offered to our students provide a passport for their global learning and opportunities to connect globally.

Looking beyond the walls of our school also brings many benefits to our students. Every year, Wilderness offers overseas school trips and exchange programs which enhance global competencies. Our students can practise the foreign language they have learned and experience different cultures first hand. While not every girl can travel overseas everyone can utilise new technologies which now allow students to connect digitally with other students from all over the globe. Collaborative classroom projects provide learning opportunities for an authentic global awareness and promote and assist our girls to forge new friendships.



RESILIENCE FOR LIFE

At Wilderness School we believe that all students have the capacity to learn and create their own clear understanding. This is reflected not only in our implementation of the Reggio Emilia philosophy in our Early Learning Centre but also in the active and explicit Thinking and Learning Curriculum throughout the Junior and Middle Schools. These programs do not teach students what to think but rather, how to think.

The Thinking and Learning Curriculum is comprehensive and sequential in the delivery of positive dispositions, learning habits, decision making, questioning and philosophical concepts based on relevant research in neuroscience. Through the programs, students are able to develop skills for critical inquiry and creative thinking. In the Senior School, students are able to apply the strategies of thinking and learning to develop an effective capacity to take responsibility for their own academic and everyday success.

Recently, for its dedication to assisting students to become reflective thinkers and learners, Wilderness School received international accreditation by the Cognitive Education Centre in the Graduate School of Education at the University of Exeter as a Thinking School – the first school outside of the UK to gain this status.

Complementing the Thinking and Learning Curriculum, our Resilient Adolescent Program provides girls with an awareness of the challenges that life can present and an understanding of the strategies that can enable them to negotiate these successfully.

Through this program, girls are engaged in reflection and in practical application to recognise potential challenges, to enable positive self image and inner dialogue, develop supportive networks and to seek assistance.

BOARDING LIFE

Making the decision to send your daughter away to school can be difficult. As a parent you want what is best for your child's educational and social development. Naturally you will be concerned about their separation from the family and how easily they will adjust to boarding life.

At Wilderness we understand this. We also know that in order to learn it is important that your daughter is happy. That is why our philosophy at Wilderness is to make the boarding community a second family for your daughter. Our excellent induction and ongoing support program for new boarders assists them to adjust to the practicalities of living in a communal environment. Boarding staff are approachable and proactive in responding to the individual needs of each girl with kindness and understanding.

Situated within the safety of the leafy school grounds, the heritage villa facade of the Wilderness Boarding House offers an inviting and homely ambience. Newly upgraded, the combination of the heritage buildings and purpose built accommodation provides spacious comfortable bedrooms and excellent study, computing, recreational and dining facilities.

Boarding staff work in partnership with parents to support boarders' emotional development and nurture their independence and resilience for life. There is a well organised routine to enable girls to balance their commitments to study, sport and leisure activities.

Food is one of the comforts associated with home. Our catering manager knows this so the menu is varied, family favourites are accommodated and visiting family members and friends are welcome to join us for a meal and special dietary requirements are met. Special dinners are held regularly and birthday teas are much loved and celebrations.

The Wilderness difference is that we trust the girls, offering them support and guidance to mature and develop the courage to think differently, lead with confidence and to have the courage to make brave moral and ethical decisions.

It is our commitment that boarders leave us prepared for joyful and ethical engagement in life, believing and knowing that their potential is unlimited.





“Life as a boarder provides the opportunity for close friendships, fun memories and a unique and supported environment for learning.”



CONNECTED FOR LIFE

In recent times there has been increasing research into the role that a collaborative school-community relationship plays in building individual and whole school health and wellbeing. It is clear that effective parent involvement in schools is a critical factor in students' success and in transforming schools into powerful communities.

One of the great strengths of Wilderness is the tangible sense of community at every level of the school that enables us to instil a sense of belonging, acceptance and united purpose.

Our community extends well beyond the immediate staff and students – it includes parents, past students and members of the wider community. Much of our community spirit can be attributed to the volunteers who work for the school through the Parents and Friends, the Wilderness Foundation, the Old Scholars, the various sporting clubs and Governing Council. The work of these volunteer groups provides formal and informal avenues for bringing our community together.

In an ever changing global environment we know that education is a three way partnership between parents, students and the school. Through our 'Raising Amazing Girls' program, School and home are able to work closely together to provide the best educational experience possible for our students. This partnership between home and school is paramount as collectively, we aim to achieve a common goal; to develop young people with a strong sense of their role as tolerant and generous global citizens and leaders, who act with integrity for a socially just world and sustainable future for earth.





Life at Wilderness is amazing...

This document gives you an overview of the diversity of experiences offered to all Wilderness students.

Educating girls to participate fully in a 'world' of opportunities with confidence and competency is central to the girls' school mission. In this we are helping to prepare our students to maximize their creativity and talent as they venture forth to play their role as responsible global citizens in a future full of possibility and potential.

At Wilderness we are committed to providing a firm foundation and inspiration for a challenging, demanding and fulfilling life in which each girl can discover and develop her gifts, find inner balance, make true friends and contribute to and act for the common good.

To understand more fully how we work with parents and girls to achieve that end, I invite you to visit our school and meet with me to discuss ways in which life's amazing possibilities are explored on a daily basis in our classrooms and other programs.

Please telephone our Academic Registrar, Mrs Elizabeth Marks, on 8344 6688 if you would like to visit us or email her at emarks@wilderness.com.au

I look forward to welcoming you.

Jane Danvers

Kindest regards
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Principal



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