Our acclaimed Girls with Grit is a unique year-long strengths based program developed by our teachers, who are experts in girls’ education, to foster perseverance and resilience (grit) and to promote a range of valuable life skills and essential dispositions important for success at school and beyond. Grit, research is now telling us, is a better predictor of success than IQ.

With an emphasis on outdoor education and physical endeavour, learning how to learn, well-being, and action and meaning, Girls with Grit is the catalyst for our girls to understand and embrace their strengths and challenges, strive to do their best in all situations and flourish. We want our girls to be proud of who they are and what they can achieve and to truly believe that ‘for the young anything is possible’.

“Failures are going to happen, and how you deal with them may be the most important thing in whether you succeed. You need fierce resolve. You need to take responsibility – grit and fortitude. The ultimate thing is that we need to grow over time, to demonstrate determination, resiliency, and tenacity. Do not let temporary setbacks become permanent excuses. And, finally, use mistakes and problems as opportunities to get better - not as reasons to quit”

JAMIE DIMON

Outdoor Education and Physical Endeavour

Girls with Grit incorporates a significant and intentional emphasis on physical endeavour in an outdoor setting. The preventative effects of healthy behaviours and physical activity on negative mental health are well established (Hassed, 2008). With this in mind, the physical pursuits of Girls with Grit empower our girls to discover personal strengths, build their confidence and to experience the immense value of team work and resilience.

In addition to their traditional Health and PE lessons, Girls with Grit sees students taking on various ongoing outdoor pursuits, such as sailing, boxing, challenging hiking and running courses, team sports and battle games. The outdoor education and physical endeavour components of the program build fitness and help the girls to become physically brave, to persevere and to be resilient – gritty. This aspect of Girls with Grit has substantial benefits, as an increase in fitness is linked to an increase in mental agility and is important for effective learning; with evidence indicating students who thrive physically and psychologically also achieve improved academic success (World Health Organization, 2011).

“Regular exercise is… known to reduce the risk of emotional problems such as anxiety and depression. Habits are established early in life and evidence suggests that physically active children are more likely to mature into physically active adults” (Victorian State Government, 2011)
Learning How to Learn

A focus on developing the dispositions of good learners plays an important role in Girls with Grit. During Year 5 students further develop an effective and purposeful language to reflect on and discuss their learning and grow to better understand how they can use strategies for growth and progress. As a research driven program, Girls with Grit draws on current brain research.

We share and explore this knowledge with the students, enabling them to better articulate their learning and thinking preferences, as well as ways they can engage in whole brain and strengths-based learning.

Wellbeing

Grit, resilience and social and emotional intelligence are intrinsically linked to wellbeing and to experiencing feelings of happiness. When we develop a deeper knowledge and understanding of ourselves and appreciate and empathise with others, the impact on an individual’s wellbeing and levels of happiness are increased. Children who experience high levels of personal wellbeing and emotional positivity have been shown to be more physically healthy, more creative and resilient, and are more likely to be actively engaged and productive in the classroom. Furthermore, such students have been shown to build stronger positive relationships and friendships, are more likely to be confident and successful learners and are less likely to be regularly absent from school.

Girls with Grit intentionally incorporates constructive social and emotional learning experiences designed to assist our girls to navigate difficult adolescent emotions and to develop and understand what it means to actively cultivate a positive sense of wellbeing. Students explore, learn and apply a wide range of techniques and approaches that promote positive emotional growth, such as gratitude, joy, triumph, happiness and love, which fosters lasting wellbeing and resilience. The program equips students with proven strategies for mindfulness and encourages a strengths-based approach to learning and growing up, to experiencing success and failure, and dealing with change.

“When we feel good, we function well”

LEA WATERS

Action and Meaning

Action is an essential element of the International Baccalaureate’s Primary Years Programme; and sustainability forms part of the Australian Curriculum, Assessments and Reporting Authority’s (ACARA) cross-curriculum priorities. Integral to Girls with Grit, and to all of our signature programs, is fostering within students a sense of responsibility to help others and to actively strive to ensure the sustainability of our planet. Girls with Grit aims to instil within our girls an intrinsic and personal sense of duty to take action and to make a difference, and to develop attributes and dispositions of justice, care, compassion and kindness for others and the environment.

Further Reading


