STAFF DEVELOPMENTS

The School welcomes the following new staff to the teaching faculty in 2011:

SENIOR SCHOOL

Deborah de Ridder, Head of Science
Michael Griffiths, Head of Drama
Belinda Markham, Head of Music
Glenn McLachlan, Professional Learning and Accreditation Coordinator/English Teacher
Kirsty Roy, English Teacher
Sonia Monger, ESE Teacher
Matthew Stephens, TAS Teacher
Beth Goddard, Science/Agriculture Teacher
Louise Dempsey, Mathematics Teacher
Elizabeth Ruff, Mathematics Teacher
Melanie Lindaya, Mathematics Teacher
Sarah Hambly, English/History Teacher

PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Dean Edwards, Year 4 Class Teacher
Jade Faassen, Year 3 Class Teacher
Joanne Hitchens, Year 6 Class Teacher
Peter Voysey, Year 6 Class Teacher
Wendy Parker, Year 1 Class Teacher
Tania Naef, German Language Teacher Yrs 3-4
Catherine Duffy, Japanese Language Teacher Yrs K-2
Noni Bruce, Stage 2 Learning Support Teacher
Pamela Sinicco, Stage 2 Teachers Aide
Sue Steer, Stage 3 Teachers Aide

We also welcome two outstanding and experienced administrative professionals to provide quality support in significant areas of operation from the commencement of 2011;

Penny van den Hoek, Academic Coordinator Prep Campus
Megan Bailey, PA to the Dean of Co-Curricular and the Knox Sports Academy

Several of the teaching appointments listed above have occurred due to internal promotions, restructuring, or the introduction of new subjects such as German and Japanese in the Prep School.

For example, our former Head of Science, Mr Andrew Weeding, has taken on the leadership position of ‘Senior Academic Master - Stage 5’ which will allow him to retain a Science teaching load but which has necessitated the recruitment of a new Head of Department in the person of Debbie de Ridder. Debbie has taught across all subject areas within the Science curriculum and is an HSC marker. Similarly, the School is delighted to have recruited the highly experienced Michael Griffiths as Head of Drama following the promotion of Charles Hambling to the role of Head of KAPA. Michael has a wealth of experience leading Drama departments in many Independent Schools and has been an HSC marker for seven years.

The promotion of Kathy Morelli to the position of Director Teaching and Learning K-6 and of Peter Ayling to the position of Director of Students K-6 has allowed the School to recruit outstanding teachers into full-time classroom teaching positions.

Those who follow current educational debates will know that the quality of the teacher in the classroom is now finally being recognised as the key to student academic performance more so than issues of funding or class sizes. Recent studies have shown that the best performing school systems recruit their teachers from the top third of each cohort graduate from their school system; top 5% in South Korea, top 10% in Finland, top 30% in Singapore and Hong Kong.

Conversely, lower performing school systems rarely attract the right people into teaching. The New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce observes that, ‘We are now recruiting our teachers from the bottom third of high-school students going to College. It is simply not possible for students to graduate (with the skills they need) unless their teachers have the knowledge and skills we want our children to have’.

From recent experience at Knox, there has been a noticeable trend for quality graduates to see teaching as a worthwhile career. An example has been our recruitment process for an English/History teacher. Four of our final candidates had a UAI mark over 90 and each candidate had either Honours or Masters Degrees in English/History. However, not only do we seek academically bright and articulate teachers but also people of character, values and involvement in a range of cultural, sporting, leadership activities.

Sarah Hambly, who will join the staff in 2011, had a UAI of 99.45 and a Bachelor of Arts with First Class Honours and a Graduate Diploma of Education. Sarah received several academic prizes at University, is fluent in French and basic Spanish, was a volunteer English Teacher to disadvantaged youths in Rabat, Morocco for 6 months, a volunteer for the Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service, the Marrickville Legal Centre, and was the University of Sydney delegate to the inaugural Australian Conference on Corporate Social Responsibility.

In an increasingly globalised world, the School employs teachers from other countries and those with international experience. Two examples follow;

New ‘English Teacher’. Kirsty Roy, was schooled in Kenya up until our Year 10 level and then in Scotland for her senior years. After completing her schooling, Kirsty was accepted into Cambridge University where she attained an MA Honours in English and Drama and subsequently completed a Post-Graduate Diploma of Education from Moray House, Edinburgh.

Kirsty has been teaching English and Drama at the prestigious Edinburgh Academy since graduation. Kirsty’s Head of Department summed her up in the following way, ‘It is Kirsty’s character that marks her out. She is a young woman who possesses at the same time a remarkable drive as well as a striking equanimity and freshness of spirit. These qualities make her someone whom pupils and staff respect, trust and like enormously. She puts everything into her planning of lessons, her marking and into organisation of special activities. Her academic results have been outstanding. This past year, she took the top GCSE class. With a group of twenty-three, she achieved 100% A*-A grades in English Literature – something unprecedented. The pupils responded to her intense desire that each of them should do well.’

Glenn McLachlan has been employed as ‘Professional Learning and Accreditation Coordinator/English Teacher’ and also has an international background in education. Born in New Zealand, Glenn gained his Bachelor of Arts from Victoria University New Zealand and subsequently taught in the United Kingdom where he attained the status of Advanced Skills Teacher which enabled him to coach and support teachers across 20 schools in London. Glenn has led teacher development programs in Australia and has presented at teacher development conferences in the Asian region. Glenn is an outstanding classroom teacher; an HSC marker and is completing a Masters of Educational Leadership at Macquarie University.

The School is excited by the quality of new staff who will join our well established team in 2011 and we trust their experience at Knox will be richly rewarding.