

Celebrating Women Leaders at Cranbrook



CRANBROOK SCHOOL



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In celebration of International Women's Day 2024 on Friday 8 March, we are proudly profiling our female leaders at Cranbrook as part of our commitment to championing diversity and fostering inclusion in education. This year's theme, 'Count Her In: Invest in women. Accelerate progress', underscores the importance of celebrating the invaluable contributions of women in the teaching profession. By spotlighting female educators, we are sharing their inspiring stories, and showcasing the diverse perspectives they bring to the classroom, whilst instilling a sense of belonging and empowerment for us all.

How long have you worked at Cranbrook and in what role/s?

I joined Cranbrook in 2019, and have worked in the Science Department teaching students in Years 7 to 10, and Senior Physics and Science Extension for the HSC and IB Diploma Programme. I am an avid football manager and mentor in Woodward House. I was the Head of Group 4 Sciences for the IB Diploma Programme and am currently the Assistant Head of Department and Staff Mentor.

What do you love about your job and the School?

These are interlinked concepts. The School fosters such a strong culture of rapport with the students and emphasises how in-depth knowledge of your students can benefit their learning. This has meant that I have had the privilege of remaining present in the development of students beyond the classroom. There is no greater moment than watching a lost Year 7 student walk as a confident young person from the School in Year 12.

I co-founded the Staff Mentoring Programme and enjoy my continued role mentoring with new teachers. Supporting these teachers through a period of school transition or the first and most hectic years of their career has allowed me to develop diverse relationships across the staffroom and grow myself as an educator.

How has the education sector changed for women in your time in teaching?

Having taught for 14 years I have seen a lot of positive change in our sector especially around parental leave which not only affects women, but the whole family unit. I can remember being a new graduate teacher receiving lots of contracts for 6 – 12 months and being asked if I was thinking about children in interviews. Last year I had my second son, the School was forthcoming with the best way for me to take parental leave and HR was available to discuss anything I needed throughout my leave. Upon my return in Term 4, I was excited that we were building a Parent's Room so that breast-feeding mothers have somewhere

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to express and time could be blocked in our timetable for us to do so. This made it so much easier to return to work without having to make the decision to wean my baby early.

What changes do hope to see continue to happen in the future?

It is important that we keep an awareness in the language we use and example we set. This will not only strengthen inclusivity in our environment, but we set the tone for the future generations, and they will follow our rhetoric and behaviour. It could be something small like remembering to include a female in your class notes. I have to go out of my way to do this as the Senior Physics syllabus does not have a single named female scientist!

What's your funniest/most memorable moment of teaching at Cranbrook?

Every term I run an anonymous class survey on the ethos of the class and the teaching methods employed in that term. Sometimes I get great feedback, but on one occasion I had a very lovely young student write in the open response at the end "I like Mrs Munn because she waves to me in the playground". This makes me smile whenever I think of it.

What advice do you have for anyone starting their career in teaching?

In the 90s it was recorded that on average teachers make 1,500 decisions each day, and I would argue we now make even more. It does not matter how long someone has been teaching, you cannot get every decision right. We all have bad days and lessons. It is how we reflect on these and re-enter those classrooms that will be remembered.