

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?

This year marks the 20th year of my span at Cranbrook – time flies! I have held a number of different roles throughout my time here, including many years as a Classroom Teacher K-6, Visual Arts Specialist K-2, Senior Teacher K-2 and Educational Development Teacher. Currently, I am the Educational Development Team Coordinator and operate as part of the Senior Leadership Team at the Junior School; it is my 5th year in this role.

What do you love about your job and the School?

My role connects me to every staff member and every classroom. I absorb the jigsaw puzzle of every individual student and consider how best to support and encourage them to explore their individual potential as they journey through their primary years. I'm engaged in strategic thinking, support, structure and consultation. I approach my job with meticulous attention

to detail and curiosity about every student in our care and am deeply committed to the heartbeat of Cranbrook, our ethos and our values. I lead an incredible team who are instrumental in ensuring that outstanding and innovative differentiation practice is in place. The passion and dedication of our staff is testament to their collective commitment to excellence.

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

During my time in teaching, the education sector (particularly in the primary years), has seen the increasing emergence of women holding leadership roles, innovating, inspiring, leading and having not only a voice but significant impact in challenging and cultivating innovative educational reform; this balance scale has shifted significantly. I feel fortunate to have been inspired, encouraged and supported by both male and female leaders and mentors operating with excellence in the leadership space.

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

If there's one thing I've become accustomed to during my career, it's that education and teaching practices continually shift and are forever changing. I'm hoping to see continued growth of innovative teaching practice and prioritisation of what matters most in capturing a well-rounded education that encompasses a balance of academics and wellbeing, and fosters a love of human interaction, collaboration, curiosity and joy. Primary education paves the way and sets in motion foundations for lifelong success and development of character from our very earliest experiences at school. In his recent book, Hidden Potential, Adam Grant highlights the critical importance of Kindergarten Teachers and their early impact on students resulting in the realisation of potential, years from their point of connection. It is of critical importance that we continue to strive for excellence in the provision of education in the early years with a future-focused lens.

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

When working with young children, funny and memorable moments happen very frequently! It is such joy to observe and nurture them as they navigate school, learning and each other in the early years, developing skills in communication, collaboration, creativity, curiosity, confidence, respect and kindness. Every day makes many memories of its own and there are certainly lots of tiny fingerprints all over my heart.

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

Embrace change, be curious, invite conversation, value collaboration, plan ahead with intention and clarity but leave flexibility to pivot to your learners, view curriculum as a continuum, acknowledge your personal capacity, prioritise your own wellbeing and continually grow in your knowledge and practice.