



SARAH MAKES THE GRADE AT BOARDING SCHOOL

Moving from day school to boarding school can be tough for anyone, but for Sarah, the transition to Canberra Grammar has been life-changing. What started as a difficult time has grown into a story of better marks, personal growth and new interests – all supported by the Commonwealth Regional Scholarship Program.

“Changing schools last year was busy,” Sarah recalls. “Settling into a new boarding school, making new friends and getting involved in so many activities was challenging.” The first big challenge was getting used to living away from home whilst trying to keep up with the school’s high standards.

Her marks improved quickly. After working hard to catch up, Sarah started doing well with lots of support. “I was very happy with my marks last year. I achieved Bs and Cs for my subjects, which was a good result for me as I had a lot of catching up to do,” she explains. Having teachers available all the time made a huge difference. “Being at boarding school has given me access to teacher support around the clock – support both inside and outside the classroom in ways that were not possible at my previous school.”

The organised study time, especially the after-dinner study periods, helped Sarah with her hardest subjects. Geography and Mathematics, which used to stress her out, became easier through the school’s extra help.

Beyond academics, Sarah discovered new talents. Fitness became a genuine passion, leading her to compete in the Sydney City2Surf fun run. Music also captured her interest, earning her a spot in the Fischer Concert Band – the school’s highest standard ensemble.

But the boarding community gave Sarah something even more important – a place where she belonged. “Having a bunch of like-minded country kids around me at the weekend makes me feel right at home, boosting my self-esteem and confidence,” she says. The weekends helped her make real friendships and feel less alone.

She also started taking on leadership roles. Sarah began helping younger boarding students and working during school holidays. “I also mentor and take care of the younger kids in the boarding school when they need a hand,” she notes.

The staff support goes beyond academics. “The boarding staff are fantastic and very supportive. They really do care for our well-being,” Sarah says. “They make close connections with us and help us with any problems thrown at us.”

All this support has helped Sarah figure out what she wants to do with her life. Being around hardworking older students inspired her. “I have made close friendships with girls in the higher years, and seeing them achieve great results in their ATAR has inspired me to do the same.”

These friendships, plus the school’s career help, have made Sarah’s future goals clearer. “After school, I aspire to go into the field of ecology and/or agricultural science,” she says. “The school has career advisers that have helped me find pathways to university and assisted me with subject selection.” Sarah’s scholarship has opened doors that will help her pursue these academic and career aspirations.

Boarding school has excelled me to achieve my greatest outcomes and growth possible – mentally, physically and emotionally. With the academic structures and methods used in learning here at boarding school, I know I will use them – applying them in my work, future university education and life.

For Sarah, Canberra Grammar hasn’t just been a school – it’s been the place where she discovered who she really is and who she wants to become; and The Commonwealth Regional Scholarship Program has played its part in making this journey possible.

