International Music Scholarship Handbook 2016
Information for prospective scholarship recipients and their families
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Welcome from the Director of Music

Thank you for your interest in St Mary’s Anglican Girls’ School.

I hope that you find this handbook useful. It contains lots of information about our school and will give you a taste of what life would be like if you came to St Mary’s. It will also answer many of your questions and help you to prepare for your time here.

More information and current news can be found on the school’s website: www.stmarys.wa.edu.au. I encourage you to go online and have a look.

International Music Scholarship recipients have the opportunity to choose from a wide range of subjects and experience life as an Australian student. At St Mary’s each girl is known and nurtured as an individual, encouraged to develop her talents and strengths to achieve her full potential.

I hope that you would embrace some of the many opportunities provided at St Mary’s and involve yourself fully in both the academic and co-curricular life of the school.

We very much look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Kim Harrison
Director of Music
The International Music Scholarship

St Mary’s is seeking to award an annual International Music Scholarship to an outstanding young woman musician, who will demonstrate outstanding musical ability and potential, and have the enthusiasm to make a leading contribution to the musical life of the school.

The scholarship is available to students entering Year 8, Year 9, Year 10 or Year 11.

Any combination of instruments and/or voice may be offered. Although students should be approximately Grade 7 standard, or above, on their principal instrument, some candidates will be given consideration for an award even if the standard is below Grade 7, provided that sufficient evidence of potential is shown. A second instrument, or experience of singing in choirs, will be a distinct advantage.

It is expected that all students on scholarships will work and practise hard and show musical leadership by playing a full and active part in school music activities. Music scholarship holders are also required to select the classroom academic music subjects offered in the curriculum in Year 10. In Years 11 and 12, they are required to take WACE Music as part of their academic curriculum.

The Scholarship offers the following:

- Free music tuition
- 50% remission of academic tuition
- 50% remission of boarding fees
Fees for 2016

The International Music Scholarship for Full Fee Paying Overseas Students consists of:

- 50% of the annual Academic Fees equalling AU $16,365
- 50% of the annual Boarding Fees equalling AU $12,415
- Free annual private tuition on a musical instrument AU $1,674
- Application Fee AU $120

**Total Scholarship value** AU $30,454

Remaining Fees to be paid:

- 50% of the annual Academic Fees AU $16,365
- 50% of the annual Boarding Fees AU $12,415

**Totalling** AU $28,780

For your information

- A one-off payment of the Endowment Fee AU $5,500
  (Payable upon acceptance of a position)
- Overseas Student Health Cover
  Approximately $500 per year, for the duration of study
  (Payable on acceptance of a position)

Please note:
Additional fees for school uniform, text books, camps, excursions and subject charges will be dependent on the year of entry that your daughter will commence at St Mary’s Anglican Girls’ School and the subjects she chooses to study. This is outlined in the 2015 Fees Schedule for Full Fee Paying Overseas Students (which is subject to change for future years).
About St Mary’s

St Mary’s Anglican Girls’ School was founded in West Perth in 1921 and relocated to Karrinyup some forty years later. The school’s well-appointed, air-conditioned buildings and modern facilities set on secure, landscaped grounds enhance the school’s academic and co-curricular programmes.

St Mary’s is approximately twelve kilometres north of the Perth city centre. It is close to a major shopping centre and to some of the city’s best beaches, with the many restaurants and beachside cafés of Scarborough close by. St Mary’s is a well-established school with great facilities, including a 50m swimming pool, a diving pool, tennis courts, dance studio, a performing arts centre, two large gymnasiums and much more. The school staff are very friendly and helpful, and are willing to assist students in any way they can.

The school enrolment consists of approximately 1400 students from Kindergarten to Year 12, 188 of whom are boarding students from rural Western Australia and overseas. The school enjoys an enviable reputation for academic excellence as well as achievement at the highest level in music, drama, art, debating, sport and outdoor education. It is also renowned for encouraging participation by students of all levels of expertise in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

St Mary’s at Metricup: A Centre for Learning and Leadership, is the school’s beautiful outdoor education facility, which opened in 2008. Set in natural bushland in the heart of the Margaret River Wine Region, the Centre is the first of its kind for an all girls’ school in Western Australia. Students in Years 6, 7, 8, 9 and 11, as well as surfing, music, boarding and language groups, enjoy school camps at this wonderful facility.

School Address

St Mary’s is located at 75 Elliott Road, Karrinyup, Western Australia, 6018. Our postal address is PO Box 105, Karrinyup, Western Australia, 6921.

School Website

The school’s website address is: www.stmarys.wa.edu.au. We encourage you to take a look at our website as it will give you much more information about the school.

School Uniform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer uniform: Terms 1 and 4</th>
<th>Winter uniform: Terms 2 and 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School dress</td>
<td>Winter shirt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maroon cardigan (optional)</td>
<td>Winter skirt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plain white turnover, ankle socks</td>
<td>Tie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown lace-up shoes</td>
<td>Maroon jumper (optional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hat</td>
<td>Tie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blazer (as needed in summer)</td>
<td>Blazer (compulsory in winter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beige pantihose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brown lace-up shoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School scarf, maroon gloves (optional)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of School Contacts

Mr Kim Harrison – Director of Music
Available 8.30am to 3.35pm, Monday to Friday
Phone: 9341 9190 (from overseas +61 8 9341 9190)
Email: kharrison@stmarys.wa.edu.au

Mrs Margaret Tolley – Music Administrator
Available 8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday
Phone: 9341 9189 (from overseas +61 8 9341 9189)
Email: mtolley@stmarys.wa.edu.au

Anne Symington (Boarding) House

Mrs Tina Campbell - Head of Boarding
Available 8.00am to 8.00pm, Monday to Friday, and in all emergencies
Phone: 0407 476 343 or 9341 9201 (from overseas +61 407 476 343 or +61 8 9341 9201)
Email: boarding@stmarys.wa.edu.au

Mrs Cate Tarran - Boarding Administrator
Available 8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday
Phone: 9341 9200 (from overseas +61 8 9341 9200)

There is a vast array of recreational pursuits provided for boarders, and these are listed on the school’s website under the boarding section. Any costs associated with recreational activities provided will be added to your school account.

Co-Curricular Programme

In addition to music, dance and drama, students can join a wide range of clubs and activities, including:

- AFL Football
- Animal Rights Club
- Badminton
- Chess Club
- Community Service
- Debating
- Duke of Edinburgh’s Award
- Future Problem Solving
- HOPE (Help Our Planet Earth)
- International Students
- Knitting for Charity
- Library Book Club
- Mock Trials
- Oaktree
- Philosophy Club
- Robotics Club
- Run Club
- Sailing
- SCRAM
- Squash
- Surfing
- Technology Committee
- Tennis lessons
- Tournament of Minds
- United Nations/Citizenship
- Vision Generation
**School Timetable**

At St Mary’s we have a 6-day timetable with 7 classes (or periods) per day - see example following.

You will have the opportunity to speak to Ms Herron to select some optional subjects that meet your needs and interests. Please be aware that sometimes it will not be possible to give you all the subjects that you would like.

You will make lots of friends, both boarding and day friends, and soon feel part of the St Mary’s family.

An example of a St Mary’s student timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Day 2</th>
<th>Day 3</th>
<th>Day 4</th>
<th>Day 5</th>
<th>Day 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>12REL02</td>
<td>RM19 MANSM</td>
<td>3LIT01</td>
<td>RM08</td>
<td>3LIT01</td>
<td>RM08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3CHEO3 D’AGOSTA</td>
<td>LAB7</td>
<td>3MAB1201</td>
<td>RM40 REDDID</td>
<td>3MAB1201</td>
<td>RM40 REDDID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3LIT01</td>
<td>RM08 D’AGOSTA</td>
<td>12PST06</td>
<td>RM43 BRANDC</td>
<td>3LIT01</td>
<td>RM08 D’AGOSTA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3LIT01</td>
<td>RM08 D’AGOSTA</td>
<td>3PHY01</td>
<td>LAB8 WALSHR</td>
<td>3LIT01</td>
<td>RM08 D’AGOSTA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>12MAPS01 WATTSR</td>
<td>3PHY01</td>
<td>LAB8 WALSHR</td>
<td>12MAPS01</td>
<td>WATTSR</td>
<td>2MUS01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3MAB1201</td>
<td>RM40 REDDID</td>
<td>2MUS01</td>
<td>MU2 PETRIE</td>
<td>12PST06</td>
<td>TOIAJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3PHY01</td>
<td>LAB8 WALSHR</td>
<td>3CHEO3 D’AGOSTA</td>
<td>LAB8 D’AGOSTA</td>
<td>3MUS01</td>
<td>MU2 HARRIKS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name of class (eg Music 3A/3B)
Class room
Teacher’s code

**School Sports Programme**

Students are encouraged to be involved in interhouse sport and, depending on their interest and experience, may also take part in interschool sport. Sports available at St Mary’s are:

- Term 1: volleyball, tennis, swimming, diving
- Term 2: netball, hockey, cross-country, gymnastics
- Term 3: athletics, basketball, soccer
- Term 4: softball, water polo
St Mary’s Music Groups

Senior School Ensembles

**Strumenti Strings** is a String Orchestra for the Year 7 and Year 8 string musicians. Students have to have reached an appropriate standard to join the group, though the focus is on inclusivity. The ensemble rehearses weekly with a number of school-based performances throughout the year.

The **Senior String Orchestra** is by invitation only and is comprised of the finest string players in the Senior School. The ensemble will typically cover a wide selection of challenging repertoire, including playing the orchestral accompaniment for senior soloists at Concerto Night.

String Musicians in the Senior School are given the opportunity and encouraged to participate in **Senior School Chamber Music Ensembles**, organised and directed by our string specialists.

Senior School Bands

**Year 7/8 Concert Band** is a band for the Year 7 and 8 woodwind, brass and percussion musicians. Students will have reached an appropriate standard to join the group, though the focus is on inclusivity. The ensemble rehearses weekly with a number of school-based performances throughout the year.

All Year 7 students not currently learning an instrument will be given the opportunity to learn a selection of concert band instruments in the **Year 7 Beginner Band**. This is done via assessment at the start of Term 1. Students will be offered free group lessons (three in a class) for half an hour a week and the free use of a school instrument for Semester 1. In addition to the weekly lesson, students will attend before-school Beginner Band rehearsals, where tuition continues in an ensemble situation.

**St Mary’s Concert Band** is by invitation only and is comprised of the finest concert band players in the Senior School. The ensemble plays an important role in the numerous formal assemblies throughout the year, providing processional and ceremonial music. At the end of each year this band visits a number of local kindergartens and primary schools to provide an educational programme of concert band favourites.

**Hale St Mary’s Concert Band 2** rehearses weekly and caters for our emerging Senior School band musicians, from Year 9 onwards. Weekly rehearsals on a Tuesday evening work towards one major performance each term, typically Music Under the Stars, the Hale June Concert and the St Mary’s September Concert.

**Hale St Mary’s Concert Band 1** is comprised of the most accomplished concert band musicians from Hale and St Mary’s Senior Schools and is one of the finest student concert bands in the state. The ensemble will typically cover a wide selection of challenging repertoire, including playing the orchestral accompaniment for senior soloists at Concerto Night and Music Under the Stars. First formed in 1994, the Concert Band has played in the Sydney Opera House, Angel Place Recital Hall and the Sydney Town Hall, Perth Concert Hall,
St George’s Cathedral, Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, and other public performances, such as ANZAC Day ceremonies in Kings Park, and the opening of the Graham Farmer Tunnel, Perth.

The Jazz Band (Years 7, 8 and 9) and the Big Band (Years 10, 11 and 12) provide an opportunity for the Jazz-inclined students, playing a range of standard Big Band swing and rock repertoire.

**Senior School Choirs**

School Chorale is an inclusive choir, open to students from Year 7 to 12. There is no audition necessary to join this choir - just a love of singing. The high standard of singing and repertoire produced by the Chorale is testament to the strong choral tradition at the school, one that is established in Kindergarten and developed through to the Senior School. The Chorale plays an important role in many school ceremonies and is featured regularly in school and community-based concerts.

Magnificats (Years 7, 8 and 9 Chamber Choir) and Hi-Fidelity (Years 10, 11 and 12 Chamber Choir) are two specialist choirs, joined by invitation and audition only. They cater for the more advanced vocalists who will typically have strong aural skills and an ability to read music, so as to sing a range of often challenging choral repertoire. Hale St Mary’s Cantate is comprised of the most accomplished vocalists from Hale and St Mary’s Senior Schools and is one of the finest student choirs in the country. School-based performances include St Mary’s Music Night, the Hale Governors Concert and Music Under the Stars, and the Cantate is also a regular feature at St George’s Cathedral, singing Evensong and the popular annual Carol Service. Performance highlights in recent years include Evensong and concert performances at Westminster Abbey, St Paul’s Cathedral (London), York Minster, Eton College Chapel and Christ Church Chapel, Oxford.

**Hale St Mary’s Music**

Since 1994, St Mary’s has had a strong musical liaison with neighbouring Hale School for boys, with a regular series of combined recitals and concerts by ensembles consisting of students from both schools. This rich musical tradition enables us to provide wonderful musical opportunities for our students and for them to perform to the highest possible musical standards. Hale St Mary’s Concertante Orchestra rehearses weekly and caters for our emerging Senior School string musicians, from Year 9 onwards. Weekly rehearsals on a Tuesday evening work towards one major performance each term, typically Music Under the Stars, the Hale June Concert and the St Mary’s September Concert.

The Hale St Mary’s Camerata Orchestra is one of the outstanding student orchestras in the state. It is comprised of the finest string players of Hale and St Mary’s Senior Schools. The ensemble will typically cover a wide selection of challenging repertoire, including playing the orchestral accompaniment for senior soloists at Concerto Night and performances at St Mary’s Music Night, the Hale Governors Concert and Music Under the Stars. First formed in 1994, this orchestra has played in the Sydney Opera House, Perth Concert Hall and St George’s Cathedral, amongst other venues.
Boarding at St Mary’s

It is a requirement for international students to live in Anne Symington House, located in the centre of the school. There are 188 boarders, most of whom come from country Western Australia, from farming areas and mining towns. Accommodation is modern, bright, air-conditioned and highly maintained. Students in the lower years share a room and in Year 12 they have their own room.

The boarding house is a warm, caring and lively environment with a strong academic focus and the opportunity to engage in numerous weekend activities and make wonderful friends. It is an inclusive and happy place to be, with a clear structure and high expectations of work ethic and behaviour. The Head of Boarding has close and regular contact with all boarding students. There is an excellent tutor programme that assists students during the week, including Maths Club on Monday evenings. The International Students’ Co-ordinator and school counsellors provide additional personal support for the girls.

The boarders have Chapel on a Sunday or Monday evening and you would be expected to be a part of this service. Any special dietary needs can be accommodated if full written details are provided to us by your family. This information will be passed on to our Head Chef, Mr Eric Barlette.

Rooms are allocated at the beginning of each term for students in a shared-room arrangement, with the exception of Year 12 students who have their own bedroom. The rooms have reverse cycle air-conditioning, a bed, wardrobe, chest of drawers, desk and chair. All rooms have pin-up boards which the girls often cover with a multitude of reminders of home. All bedding and towels are provided.

Rooms have internet access, although this is heavily filtered by the school server. All students have 50mb download allowance per day and there is no access to Facebook or MSN. There is SKYPE access during restricted times and with headphones. All students are expected to bring their own laptops (St Mary’s will be introducing a one-on-one laptop programme in 2016, and you will be sent more information in August this year) and headphones.

Health Care

It is very important that the detailed medical forms and permission sent out by the school are completed. These need to be attended to and returned well before your arrival.

The school has two nursing staff on duty Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 5.00pm. They look after all the students and especially the boarders. There are several doctors’ surgeries near to the school should the need arise. If advanced medical care is needed, the school takes its students to Princess Margaret Hospital for Children, which is about 20 minutes away from the main school campus.

Parents should contact the school nursing staff prior to arrival to discuss any medical concerns or needs their daughter might have, to ensure that any ongoing medical treatment can be continued and monitored during their stay. For boarders, all medication must be
handed to nursing staff on arrival and cannot be kept in bedrooms. Medication details should be clear to ensure that their contents are understood. The nursing or boarding staff will make contact with parents should there be any medical concerns, and any medical expenses incurred will be charged to their school account.

The school nursing staff can be contacted through boarding@stmarys.wa.edu.au and this is also the contact email address for the Head of Boarding at any time. All details sent to the nursing staff are kept confidential.

We require all girls to have their own Medicare Card. Please apply directly to Medicare. Cards will be kept on file in the medical centre.

Boarders will be vaccinated against Hepatitis A and/or B, influenza and H1N1 if parents wish for it to be done.

**Guardians – Overseas Students**

Each overseas student attending St Mary’s must have a guardian in Perth. The guardian must accept full responsibility for the student in his/her care in the absence of the student’s parents. The guardian must be 25 or over and will act as the parent whilst the student is a boarder at St Mary’s.

The guardian must make arrangements for accommodation over long weekend leave and during holidays if the student does not return home. They would also be responsible for the care of the student if she is required to leave the boarding house because of personal crisis, contagious illness or the like. It is expected that guardians would have the student to stay in their homes and supervise them during their stay, particularly overnight. Failure to take responsibility for students may mean that the guardianship will be removed and parents must find another guardian to fulfil this task.

If the guardian, for any reason, is to be away for an extended period, the Head of Boarding must be advised of an alternative contact for this time. The guardian is to accommodate or store excess luggage at the end of each year.

There is always pressure on airline seats at the start and conclusion of school terms so travel arrangements for the entire year should be made at the start of the year so schooling is not missed at any time. It is important that students stay until the end of each term and arrive back to start the school term on time.

**Visa Requirements**

A letter will be sent to you from the School Principal confirming your scholarship so that you may apply for a visa to Australia, should you require one. Most students arrive on a study visa but as you will be attending a school, there may be the need to have a health check. Please refer to the Australian embassy or consulate closest to where you live to check the specific requirements relevant to you. Your visa application should be made well ahead of your departure date. Extensive information regarding applying for a visa can be found on the Australian Department of Immigration’s website at www.immi.gov.au/visitors/special-activity/416/index.htm. If you have any questions or problems in this regard, please contact Mr Harrison (kharrison@stmarys.wa.edu.au).
Travel and Arrival Details

You will most likely arrive in Australia at the Perth International Airport, where you will pass through immigration and customs. The airport is approximately 30kms from the school.

Don’t forget to send your flight details to the school, well ahead of your arrival, to ensure that everyone is fully informed of your arrival and departure details.

As jetlag may be a problem initially, you should aim to arrive a few days before the start of the new term.

About Perth

Telephoning Australia from Overseas

The International Code for Australia is +61.

Currency

The school’s bank account details are:
   Bank: Commonwealth Bank of Australia
   Branch: Karrinyup
   Account Name: St Mary’s Anglican Girls’ School
   BSB: 066 157
   Account: 1012 3268
   Swift Code: CTBAAU2S

Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) at most Australian banks accept debit and credit card accounts linked to most major international financial organisations (eg Visa, Mastercard, American Express). Students will only have access to these banks at the weekends and on trips with their host family. Australian banks are generally open from 9.00am to 4.00pm Monday to Friday and most are closed on the weekends. If students arrive with foreign currency, this money may be exchanged at the airport or at shopping centres with currency exchanges. If they are carrying cash they should make sure that it is kept in a safe place. The boarding house manages a bank for its students which they may pay money into and withdraw funds as needed. Large sums of money should not be kept in bedrooms.

Voltage

Australia’s electricity voltage for domestic use is 240V/50hz and we use a distinctive three pin plug Type I electrical outlet. Students will need to supply their own adaptor for all electrical items including laptops and phone chargers and these can normally be purchased at the airport or from hardware stores before departure.
Perth Climate

Perth has a Mediterranean climate, which means that for most of the year the weather is fine and sunny, and even during the short mild winter the sun is often shining. It is because of these endless summers that many Perth activities revolve around the outdoors. More detailed information on Perth weather can be found on the Australian Bureau of Meteorology’s website at http://www.bom.gov.au/

Summer (December-February) is warm to hot with little or no rain. Perth enjoys a refreshing afternoon sea breeze known as the Fremantle Doctor which brings welcome relief on hot days.

Autumn (March-May) is warm and sunny with cooler nights. It’s mostly fine with occasional showers.

Winter (June-August) days are cool but often sunny. This is the rainy season with occasional storms.

Spring (September-November) for the most part is sunny and warm with minimal rain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sep</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average max temperature °C</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>18.3</td>
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<td>20.0</td>
<td>22.9</td>
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<td>9.5</td>
<td>11.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average Rainfall (mm)</td>
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<td>87.0</td>
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<td>40.8</td>
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<td>Sunshine hours</td>
<td>359.6</td>
<td>310.8</td>
<td>294.5</td>
<td>246</td>
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<td>177</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>220.1</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>297.6</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>359.6</td>
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</table>

Information sourced from the Australian Bureau of Meteorology
Testimonials

Stephanie Goh ('12)

Our daughter, Stephanie, was awarded the St Mary’s International Music Scholarship in 2010 and attended St Mary’s as a full-time boarder from 2011 through 2012.
She subsequently got offers to study Medicine from the University of Western Australia, Perth, the University of New South Wales, Sydney, and the University of St Andrews, Scotland. She is now studying in Scotland.

She had a fantastic and memorable time at St Mary’s. The two years there were the best times of her life. She made so many lifelong friends, not just with her peers, but also with her teachers.

When she started her journey in Perth, she was a reserved, sweet and hard-working girl, like any other.

After merely two years at St Mary’s, she had emerged as a very confident, ambitious young lady who was ready to take on the world. We noticed that her focus, her aspirations, work ethic, people skills, music skills, and her innate abilities, had taken a big leap forward.

We would like to credit her St Mary’s sojourn for this wonderful transformation. We strongly and unreservedly recommend St Mary’s.

Victor Goh & Mor Cher, Singapore, father and mother of Stephanie Goh
Stephanie Goh was Principal Viola in the Camerata and Senior Strings Orchestra, 2011-2012

Emma Jane Shum ('14)

Being at St Mary’s has markedly broadened Emma Jane’s perspectives on music and academic learning. More preciously, I have watched her blossom and flourish, soaking up the positivity and genuine care and support, both in the classroom and in the boarding house. St Mary’s is a dream environment for the serious music student – from the first contact with the Music Director through the practice studios and auditorium, the myriad of opportunities and choices for creative expression, to the guidance and rigorous preparation for her onward learning journey. The natural tranquility of the school in proximity to the awe-inspiring vitality of Trigg bushland-Scarborough beach surroundings is a perfect setting for mind-body-soul wellbeing.

My shy and diffident teenager has grown up into a thoughtful, confident and mature young lady. She has gone beyond just believing to now knowing that 'nothing is impossible' and 'effort makes the difference' - at St Mary's doing what she loves and loving what she is born to do - play music!

Sulynn Choong, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, mother of Emma Jane Shum
Emma Jane was the leader of the Camerata and Senior Strings Orchestra, 2013-2014
J-Mee Chong (’13)

Someone once asked me, “If you had to describe your experience at St Mary’s with one word, what would it be?” A bunch of words came gushing into my mind – amazing, incredible, exhilarating and a heap of other words which I knew would all just be mere understatements. It then occurred to me that I couldn’t summarise the last four years of my stay here into just one word. There have been so many aspects of this experience that have made it such an indescribable one. I began as a little Year 9, who had entered this realm of unending maroon uniforms, anxious but excited to begin schooling in a new country. There were so many options to explore, new faces to meet. I am so fortunate to have been awarded the International Music Scholarship to study in a school that offers such an eclectic mix of activities – orchestras for the musicians, sport clubs for the athletes, art festivals for the artists to flaunt their latest art pieces, sewing lessons, cake baking classes, charity clubs – believe me, the list never ends!

Over the years, I had truly grown to love the school. Every now and then I find myself crying over even the simplest things such as the beautiful trees around school because I am already missing school so much! St Mary’s has truly been a place of learning and opportunities, and I cannot be more grateful to Mrs Thomson, Mr Harrison and all the other teachers and staff here who have made my choice to stay here one of the best decisions I’ve made in my life.

J-Mee Chong, Kuala Lumpur

Justina Ravi (’12)

It is remarkable how much St Mary’s has impacted on me. I arrived in Year 10 on an International Music Scholarship, full of expectancy. I got out of the experience achieving far more than what I had hoped for. I was terrified when I first arrived but with the girls at the boarding house being so bubbly and expressive, it was impossible to remain nervous for long. Coming from a country where academics are the top priority, with arts seen as more of a hobby, it was incredible to see how the arts were taken as serious subjects.

There is no doubt in my mind that St Mary’s played an integral role in my life in shaping my character to who I am today, a confident and independent individual - ready to take the world by storm! I looked forward to school and every time I came home during the holidays I would count down the days till I was back at school again.

I know the friends I made at St Mary’s are friends for life. St Mary’s has been the most memorable experience of my life so far. I am truly blessed. No matter where I may be, St Mary’s will forever be a part of me.

Justina Ravi, Singapore