



# st mary's women

## ASHLEIGH GILLON ('98) Journalist



*"St Mary's encourages girls to believe that with hard work, they can achieve whatever they set their mind to."*

My early school reports refer to a shy, quiet girl afraid to speak up in class. Now, my job involves speaking up to thousands of viewers and interviewing powerful people on a daily basis. The change happened in Year 7 at St Mary's when I was encouraged to enter a public speaking competition. Doing well in that gave me a much needed confidence boost and by the end of that year I was MC at the Junior School Speech Night, a very big deal at the time!

My confidence grew in Senior School, through debating, drama, music and sporting endeavours. English literature and media classes opened my eyes to the world of journalism. With the encouragement of an enthusiastic teacher, producing documentaries became a keen interest and led to success in amateur film awards. Participation in UN Youth Dialogues and running the school's World Vision Chapter created an eagerness to learn more about the world.

Now, as a news anchor and political reporter for *Sky News*, I'm still learning. One day I'll be focusing on industrial relations, the next on foreign policy, or the latest scandal to engulf an embattled politician. Over my career, I've followed Prime Ministers around the country during election campaigns and

around the world. I've reported from Indonesia, the UN in New York and the White House in Washington. As the host of a live rolling news programme I've interviewed most senior politicians in this country and foreign dignitaries, including former British PM Tony Blair.

St Mary's encourages girls to believe that with hard work, they can achieve whatever they set their mind to. Being instilled with the confidence to try is a valuable gift I've carried with me throughout my career.

