



28 June 2022

Dear members of the St Catherine's School community,

The St Catherine's School Council is pleased to announce the appointment of Mrs Judith Poole as Interim Head of St Catherine's, commencing January 2023. She will take over from Dr Julie Townsend who has been Headmistress of St Catherine's since 2010. Mrs Poole has a distinguished record in school leadership, with a particular passion for the education of girls and young women. For 12 years, she was the Head of Abbotsleigh, a highly regarded Anglican day and boarding school for girls on Sydney's North Shore. Mrs Poole is an exemplary candidate whom the Council has appointed as Interim Head for 2023 and 2024.

We are delighted that Mrs Poole will be leading our school community. She is a remarkable educator and visionary leader. Her wealth of experience reveals her consistent commitment to providing the very best of education for young women and fostering a school environment in which the entire community thrives. The Council joins the whole school community in looking forward to having her join us at St Catherine's.

Mrs Poole's educational philosophy centres around empowering students to achieve their full potential. She has told us, "I am passionate about educating young women for life in a caring, positive and aspirational environment. Fundamental to my leadership is my commitment to the pastoral care of each student, the professional development of every member of staff and the wellbeing of the entire school community".

Born in the US, Mrs Poole completed her undergraduate studies in physics and mathematics before joining the Peace Corps with her husband. In Serowe, Botswana she discovered her love of teaching and the transformative power of education. Upon returning to the US, Mrs Poole continued her work in the education sector while she and her husband raised three daughters. After their family relocated to Sydney in 1988, Mrs Poole began to teach at Meriden School in Strathfield during which time she completed a Master of Educational Leadership

Mrs Poole's innovative work in computing studies and technology led her to be recruited to the position of State Manager for a prominent educational software company where she worked in close consultation with an extensive range of independent schools throughout New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria. Eventually, her love of educating young women called her back to the classroom and in 2003 she accepted the position of Deputy Head at Abbotsleigh. Two years later Mrs Poole was appointed to the position of Headmistress, a position she held from 2005-2016. Since then, she has continued her impressive work in the education sector through her coaching of executive staff and consultation with school leaders and councils in NSW and Africa. Mrs Poole is married to Dr William Poole and they have three adult children. She is an active Christian and a keen fisherwoman who particularly loves crabbing with her grandchildren.

The Council is very thankful for Dr Townsend's 13 years of exceptional leadership of St Catherine's. Her optimism, strategic vision and steadfast enthusiasm for developing young women of both character and intellect has served our school and its community extremely well. We look forward to the school's final six months under her leadership and then to farewelling her properly at the end of 2022.

Yours sincerely

Danusia Cameron  
Chair, St Catherine's School Council