

GIRLS GRAMMAR ADVANTAGE



Rockhampton Girls
Grammar School

Est 1892

Girls Grammar graduates are top of their class. Girls are achieving in a broad range of careers including medicine, veterinary science, engineering, creative arts, agriculture, technology, health services, education, law, journalism and business. Girls Grammar girls graduate with the confidence to do anything.

There will always be debate surrounding education and one of the consistently significant discussions focuses on what is the best schooling for girls and boys. Do they learn better separately or together? Much of the recent research indicates that girls learn more comprehensively in classes with other girls.

Mrs Christine Hills, Principal of Rockhampton Girls Grammar, is surprisingly reserved in her support of the evidence. Her initial response was that “No school can be the right school for every student and that is true for both boys and girls. Rockhampton and district possesses a range of schools across all education sectors which provide great choices for families.”

When pressed further she added that “the single sex education versus coeducation debate was something parents should consider when selecting the right school for their daughters.”

Girls from single sex schools are over-represented in university enrolments, particularly in high status courses such as medicine and law.

So what are the advantages of single sex education for girls? The Principal reflects that the evidence indicates that “Single sex schools influence girls to be more competitive and less risk-averse than girls in coeducational settings. Girls feel empowered to behave in these ways without the presence of boys. These are advantageous skills for leadership and in most careers.

“This, is further supported by research which shows that girls from single sex secondary experiences enter university more academically and politically engaged with more confidence in their mathematical and computer skills. This means that these students are more likely to pursue courses such as engineering or science.”

The Principal is unapologetic about pursuing an environment which allows girls to reach the potential each possesses. She says “A single sex environment may make it less likely that students will perceive particular academic subjects as being ‘for’ a particular sex. Why are there so few female engineers?”

She laughs when asked about the artificial nature of segregation in schooling, “This is 2016! Girls have fathers, brothers, friends and team mates who are not removed from their lives! The girls are not isolated from males, they just undertake their learning in an environment which is designed to suit their education, growth and development needs.”

While identifying parent influence as hugely influential, the Principal says that “the data shows that girls from single sex schools are over-represented in university enrolments, particularly in high status courses such as medicine and law.”

While acknowledging that tertiary pathways are an essential aspect of secondary schooling, Christine Hills feels that an equally fundamental characteristic is the development of self-confidence and self-awareness. “I strongly believe that for most girls, a single sex education provides the room to be challenged and the space to grow as a young woman.”