

Presentation to prospective parents, June 2014

by Caroline Mordaunt

My association with Guilford Young College started in 2009 when my elder son, William, began studying at the College after attending St Aloysius Primary School and spending his high school years at Sacred Heart College in New Town. Currently my younger son Nicholas, who was in the founding high school year at St Aloysius Catholic College, is in Year 12 – and working hard towards his exams at the end of the year (with mid-year exams to get through in July) - and has enjoyed playing tennis for the College this year.

The boys have gained a huge amount from being at Guilford, both academically and in terms of their overall wellbeing and development.

I asked them to jot down for me what stood out for them. I know what I value about the school, but their experience is what really counts.

Nicholas emphasised the fact that when you come to Guilford you meet up again with many former classmates and friends from primary school who have spent their high school years across Hobart and southern Tasmania in the different Catholic and State schools. This can be an important factor for young people who may be a little uncertain about themselves and their place in the world. To have the security of familiar faces, learn about contrasting school cultures and have the opportunity to renew or secure friendships is a vital stepping stone for many.

And the fact that Guilford is co-educational, giving young men and women the chance to interact socially at a critical time in their development, was also important to my boys.

Another thing Nicholas emphasised was the huge range of subjects that are offered here at Guilford. Both my boys have chosen pretty much humanities subjects with a view to going on to university (Will is currently doing Arts/Law at UTAS), but there is also a fantastic range of VET subjects available, and if they had chosen that path I could not have found a better selection. I think GYC was recently rated as third in Australia on its VET offerings – an amazing achievement. A smaller college would not have the capacity to offer such a range of subjects.

Will said, and I totally agree with this, that the quality of the teaching is very high, with a huge effort from the teachers to maximise the potential of all students, and, he said, ‘They prepare you really well for the exams’. Both boys feel that the teachers are really supportive and had or have their best interests at heart.

The fact that there is a great sense of community at the school was something both boys agree on, perhaps because, as Will said, everyone who is there wants to be there, and wants to gain positively from their time at Guilford. And that time goes very quickly – two short years in which my boys have changed from schoolboys to young men confident about their future and well-informed about where their experience and qualifications can take them. Careers advice from the school is excellent; with an eye to the future and the notion that the schooling they receive at Guilford is just the start of their work/life path. Will felt the advice was practical, realistic and tailored to his circumstances.

As a parent I have been constantly impressed by the care and nurturing my boys have received at the school with always the sense that the teaching staff were working with and for them on all levels. The enforcement of rules about uniform can be a bit of a bugbear for some, but really I feel it teaches young people that you need to go on making the effort and live up to other people’s expectations, even on days when you’d rather not. After all, life out there in the real world isn’t going to be any less forgiving!

Overall, I have only good things to say about GYC and would not hesitate to recommend it to any young person or parent who wants a school where dignity of the individual and a caring environment are as important as academic or VET achievements. And the college is entering a great new phase of its existence with the building of the Arts Centre in Glenorchy, and the establishment of an alumni group earlier this year. Bobby Court is a wonderful principal, and her objectives and character shine through in all aspects of teaching and college life.