

Newington College is a multi-campus independent Uniting Church single-sex and co-educational early learning, primary and secondary day and boarding school for boys, located in Stanmore, an inner-western suburb of Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. Established in 1863 at Newington House, Silverwater, the college celebrated its sesquicentenary in 2013. The college is open to boys of all faiths and denominations. Newington has been governed by an Act of Parliament since 1922.[7]

Newington has two preparatory schools, Wyvern House in Cambridge Street, Stanmore, and a school at Lindfield on Sydney's Upper North Shore.[8] Newington currently caters for approximately 2,000 students from Year K to Year 12.[6] Edmund Webb House, a boarding facility, is in Cambridge Street, Stanmore.[8] The Robert Glasson Memorial Boat Shed is on the Parramatta River at Abbotsford and contains a boarding facility for thirty boys.[9] The college is a member of the Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia (AHISA),[10] the Junior School Heads Association of Australia (JSHAA),[11] the Australian Boarding Schools' Association,[8] and a founding member of the Athletic Association of the Great Public Schools of New South Wales (AAGPS).[12]

The college prepares students for the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme and the NSW Higher School Certificate.

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History[edit]

Early history[edit]

The Reverend John Manton proposed that a collegiate institute, 'decidedly Wesleyan in character', be founded in Sydney and that the school 'be open to the sons of parents of all religious denominations'. On 16 July 1863, the Wesleyan Collegiate Institute opened with 16 boys and a small number of theological students. As no suitable buildings were available in Sydney at the time, Newington House, the centrepiece of John Blaxland's 1,200-acre (490 ha) estate at Silverwater, was leased.

Newington College, as the school soon became known, prospered during its time on the Parramatta River and in 1869 was the first Australian school to play rugby football (against the University of Sydney),[13] and soon after was the first school in Australia to hold an athletics carnival. In 1869, the Newington College Cadet Corps was formally incorporated by the Governor of New South Wales, Somerset Lowry-Corry, 4th Earl Belmore.[14] It is the oldest continuous corps in the Australian Army Cadets.

Expanding student numbers meant that more extensive premises closer to the city were required. A bequest by John Jones of land at Stanmore saw the College move to the newly fashionable inner-city suburbs. A grand stone edifice was designed by Thomas Rowe and has been described by architectural historian Morton Herman as 'an almost perfect example of scholastic Gothic Revival architecture'.[15] The Thomas Rowe-designed Founder's Building, including its interior and surrounding grounds, are listed on the heritage register of the former Marrickville Council.[16] Thomas Wran completed substantial architectural sculpture commissions on the capitals of the stone colonnade of the building.[17] Earth-moving work began on the site in 1876 and by May 1878 the building had reached first floor height. A public ceremony was held and six commemorative stones were laid. Amongst the six given the honour of laying the stones were Sir George Wigram Allen KCMG,[18] the philanthropist who was Speaker of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly. He had lent A£12,000 for the new buildings at Stanmore and later endowed the Wigram Allen

Scholarship for boys proceeding to matriculation. The formal opening of the new school building was by Sir George on 18 January 1881. By resolution of the College Council, the name Newington College was perpetuated on the new site. Seventy school and theological students migrated from Silverwater to Stanmore and Newington has remained there ever since.[19]

Other local government heritage listings across the Newington campuses include, at Stanmore, the former small stone church built in 1874[20] and the Victorian-style gate house;[21] and at Abbotsford, the historical boat shed, built c. 1890s.[22] A gymnasium was built in 1890, and a swimming pool was opened in 1894.

20th century[edit]

Newington ceased its connection to theological training in 1914, when the Wesleyan Theological Institution moved to the newly founded Leigh College at Strathfield South.[23] In 1921, a stone war memorial, designed by Old Newingtonian William Hardy Wilson, was opened in memory of those old boys who had paid the supreme sacrifice in World War I.[24] A separate preparatory school was opened in 1921, after a bequest by Sir Samuel McCaughey. It became known as Wyvern House in 1938, when a new building was opened by Old Newingtonian Sir Percival Halse Rogers.[25]

In 1925, a rowing facility was built at Abbotsford,[26] and in 1957 another preparatory school was founded on the North Shore – first at Killara, and subsequently relocated to Lindfield. Since the World War II, the College buildings and facilities have expanded significantly.

During the Headmastership of Tony Rae, the Senior Block (1972) and Resources Centre Library (1975) and Chapel were opened. A new Physical Education Centre was opened by Old Newingtonian Nick Farr-Jones AM, and a new boatshed at Abbotsford were two of the most important property additions. In 1998, while Michael Smee was Headmaster, Wyvern House moved to a separate campus in Cambridge Street, Stanmore. The former Wyvern House building was then renovated and renamed the Le Couteur Wing in memory of former Headmaster Philip Le Couteur.[27] In 2007 Newington spent \$3.51 million to buy the Concordia Club (the former German cultural club), on Stanmore Road.[28] Le Couteur was re-renovated early in 2014 and visual arts classes now occupy the first floor with languages and learning enhancement classes held on level two.[29]

21st century[edit]

During 2006, the press reported on an industrial relations dispute at Newington in which then Headmaster David Scott planned to force staff to re-apply for their jobs in a restructure that would also reduce their holidays. Scott said that "The action was taken after a comprehensive review of the school and had nothing to do with the federal government's Work Choices reforms"[30] The Sydney Morning Herald reported that David Scott believed that the union was being mischievous 'at best', or using an 'outright and deliberate lie' in suggesting the restructure was linked to workplace legislation.[31] Following a meeting between the Independent Education Union and Newington College, Scott agreed to not declare senior staff positions vacant and the school continued to negotiate collective arrangements covering salary and working conditions for staff.[32]

David Mulford was appointed Headmaster in 2009 and served in that role until retiring in

2018. In 2012, the Nesbit Wing, built prior to the college centenary in 1963 in honour of Robert H. Nesbitt, was refurbished and extended to encompass the Technology Centre.[33] Between 2009 and 2012 Newington spent \$78 million on capital works. \$33.7 million was outlaid on infrastructure alone in 2012.[34] In 2013 the College celebrated its Sesquicentenary[35] with the opening of two new buildings honouring two former Headmasters – The Lawrence Pyke Science Centre and The Tony Rae Resources Centre Library. This development was awarded the Master Builders Association of New South Wales's Excellence in Construction Award and was funded by donations and parent fees.[36] The facilities at the Stanmore campus cover over 1200 square metres and contain a library, a 250-seat lecture theatre, the new boarders' dining room, a cafeteria, and science labs.[37] In November 2013, the PE Centre was renamed the Taylor Sports Centre in honour of Old Newingtonian cricket and rugby union international Johnny Taylor. The naming was performed by Old Newingtonian Olympic rower and coach Michael Morgan OAM.[38] On 18 July 2016, in commemoration of the sesquicentenary of Newington College's brother school Tupou College, the reigning monarch of the Kingdom of Tonga King Tupou VI and his wife Queen Consort Nanasipau'u visited the college to open the Tupou College Centre. The centre houses specialist teaching spaces and a new health centre.[39] The Duckmanton Drama Centre was named in honour of Sir Talbot Duckmanton CBE and opened on 31 July 2017. Sir Talbot served on the Newington College Council from 1964 until 1978 and was Chairman of the Council Executive Committee for five years.[40] College Council[edit]

The Newington College Council Act allows for the appointment of up to 24 members of the council: nine clerical appointments; nine lay appointments; and six members nominated by the Old Newingtonians Union (ONU).

College staff[edit]

Presidents and headmasters[edit]

From its founding in 1863 until 1900, Newington had a system of dual control with a President (who was an ordained minister) and a Headmaster. As an ordained minister, Charles Prescott assumed both roles on his appointment in 1900 and, on his retirement in 1931, the role of President was abolished.

Presidents[edit]

Ordinal	President	Term begin	Term end	Time in office	Education	Previous positions held	Notes
1	Rev. John Manton	1863	1864	0–1 years	Founding Principal, Horton College, Tasmania		
2	Rev. Joseph Horner Fletcher	1865	1887	21–22 years	Kingswood School Founding Principal, Wesley College, Auckland		
3	Rev. Dr William Kelynack	1887	1891	3–4 years	Penzance President, Australasian Wesleyan Methodist Church		
4	Rev. James Egan Moulton	1891	1900	8–9 years	Kingswood School Founding Headmaster, Tupou College, Tonga	[a]	
5	Rev. Charles John Prescott	1900	1931	30–31 years	Kingswood School Worcester College, Oxford Founding Headmaster, Wesleyan Ladies' College, Sydney	[b]	

Headmasters[edit]

Ordinal Headmaster Term begin Term end Time in office Education Previous positions held  
Notes

1 Rev. James Egan Moulton 1863 1864 0–1 years Kingswood School Founding Headmaster,  
Tupou College, Tonga [note a]

2 Thomas Johnston 1864 1866 1–2 years

3 George Metcalfe 1867 1869

[clarification needed] 1–2 years

University of Melbourne

University of Sydney

Proprietor and Headmaster, High School, Goulburn

Founding Headmaster, Druitt Town Public School

4 Michael Howe 1868

[clarification needed] 1877 8–9 years

Trinity College, Dublin

University of Melbourne

Founding Headmaster, Galt Grammar School

Headmaster, Jarvis Collegiate Institute, Toronto

5 Joseph Coates 1877 1883 5–6 years Huddersfield College Founding Headmaster, Sydney  
Boys' High School

6 William Williams 1884 1892 7–8 years

Newark Grammar School

Trinity College, Cambridge

Professor of Classics & English Literature, University of Tasmania

7 Arthur Lucas 1893 1898 4–5 years

Kingswood School

Balliol College, Oxford

Headmaster, Sydney Grammar School

Professor of Mathematics, University of Tasmania

8 Edward William Cornwall 1899 1900 0–1 years Keble College, Oxford

Acting Headmaster, Ipswich Grammar School

Lecturer Classics and Languages, University of Melbourne

[41][42]

9 Rev. Charles Prescott 1900 1931 30–31 years

Kingswood School

Worcester College, Oxford

Founding Headmaster, Wesleyan Ladies' College, Sydney [note b]

10 Philip Le Couteur 1931 1948 16–17 years

Queen's College, Melbourne

University College, Oxford

University of Bonn, Germany

Headmaster, Methodist Ladies' College, Melbourne

Headmaster, Hale School, Perth

11 Mervyn Austin 1950 1951 0–1 years

Melbourne Grammar School  
University of Melbourne  
Christ Church, Oxford  
Professor of Classics and Ancient History, University of Western Australia  
12 Lawrence Pyke 1952 1960 7–8 years  
Wesley College, Melbourne  
University of Melbourne  
University of Oxford  
Dean of Graduate Studies, University of Melbourne  
13 Ernest Duncan 1962 1963 0–1 years  
University of Otago  
Columbia University  
Professor of Mathematics, Rutgers University  
14 Rev. Douglas Trathen 1963 1970 6–7 years  
Canterbury Boys' High School  
University of Sydney  
Headmaster, Wolaroi College, Orange  
15 Tony Rae 1972 1993 20–21 years  
The Scots College, Sydney  
University of Sydney  
Headmaster, Albury Grammar School  
16 Michael Smee 1993 2003 9–10 years  
The King's School, Sydney  
University of Sydney  
Headmaster, Pulteney Grammar School, Adelaide  
17 David Scott 2003 2009 5–6 years  
University of Western Australia  
Murdoch University  
Edith Cowan University  
Headmaster, Kingswood College, Melbourne  
Headmaster, Anglican Church Grammar School, Brisbane  
18 David Mulford 2009 2018 8–9 years  
Principal, Radford College, Canberra  
Headmaster, Blue Mountains Grammar School  
19 Michael Parker 2019 incumbent 1–2 years  
James Ruse Agricultural High School  
University of Sydney  
Headmaster, Oxley College, Bowral  
Deputy Headmaster, Cranbrook School, Sydney  
Notes