

Northmead Creative and Performing Arts High School

HPGE Spotlight



Edition 5, August 2025

Ms Kirsty Allen, HPGE Coordinator

Extending Potential Through the Arts

In this edition of the HPGE Spotlight, we celebrate the creativity, passion, and talent of our Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) faculty. From the stage to the studio, our students have excelled in dance, drama, music, visual arts, and circus—embracing opportunities to perform, exhibit, and create at both school and professional venues. These experiences highlight the principles of the HPGE framework, with students demonstrating originality, persistence, collaboration, and innovation in authentic contexts. Whether competing at eisteddfods, performing at Riverside Theatre, curating exhibitions, or leading community projects, CAPA students continue to extend their skills, challenge themselves, and inspire others through their artistry.

Faculty: CAPA

Jenna Cullen (Head Teacher CAPA/Dance)
Daniel Wilson (Rel. Head Teacher, CAPA/Music/Entertainment)
Alese Bottrill (Rel. Head Teacher PDHPE)
Alycia Quinn (Head Teacher Administration)
Bianca Argyrous
Sarah Elliott
Stephanie Falk
Michael Flarretty
Natalie Gooneratne
Maria Miller
Katherine Penny
Melissa Rein
Melanie Sammes
Leanne Sawyer
Jacky Shen
Maria Simpson
Renee Trenear
Elizabeth Watson

Upcoming Key Dates

CAPA Auditions 2nd Round
14th-17th October 2025

Exploring Culture Through Rhythm: Year 7 PBL on Australian Identity

This term, Year 7 students completed a Project-Based Learning (PBL) task exploring the theme of Australian Identity. Working in groups, students composed and performed original rhythm cycles using percussion instruments, supported by notated posters that highlighted the key musical elements of their compositions.

The project encouraged students to express their ideas about Australian culture in both creative and collaborative ways. In doing so, they reflected several principles of the High Potential and Gifted Education (HPGE) framework, including:

- **Original thinking and creativity** in composing unique rhythm cycles.
- **Collaboration and communication** through rehearsals and group decision-making.
- **Curiosity and deep engagement** in exploring cultural themes through music.
- **Problem-solving and persistence** in refining and notating their musical ideas.

By combining performance with notation, students were able to demonstrate both their practical skills and their theoretical understanding of music. The project highlighted the value of teamwork, creativity, and cultural exploration, while also building students' confidence and extending their learning through authentic performance experiences.

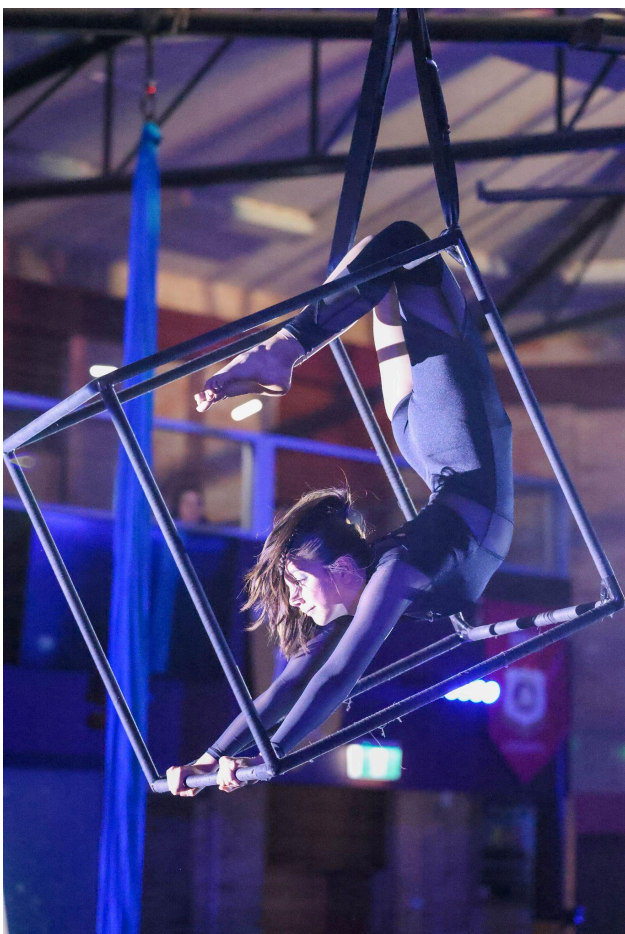


Life is a Circus at Northmead

Since 2018, Northmead Creative and Performing Arts High School has been proud to be among a select number of schools in NSW to offer Circus as both a curriculum subject and extracurricular opportunity. What began as a bold addition to the CAPA program has grown into a thriving strand of our creative community.

Today, Circus is offered as an Endeavour Elective for Years 7–8, a NESA-approved Elective for Years 9–10, and through an after-school ensemble. Students train in the art of aerial and ground circus as well as acrobatics, developing technical precision, resilience, and creativity. The program goes beyond physical training. Students gain a deeper understanding of the body in motion, circus training methods, and the Australian circus industry. They explore performance elements, technical production skills, and the historical traditions that shape circus arts today.

Each year, Circus students present their own Circus Showcase, where they demonstrate the incredible skills, originality, and artistry they have developed, sharing their passion and talent with the wider school community.



Circus exemplifies the HPGE framework by combining physical, creative, and intellectual domains—challenging students to push boundaries, take risks, and shine in a unique performance art form that is truly one of a kind.

Taking the Stage: Dance & Music Showcase at Riverside Theatre

In June 2025, our Dance and Music students took to the stage at Riverside Theatre, Parramatta, for the annual Mid-Year Showcase. For many of our performers, Riverside has become a second home—an inspiring professional venue where they have grown in confidence and skill since their first performances in Year 7. As Year 11 Dance students **Sebastian, Lily, and Ella reflected**, “Each experience has been incredibly rewarding, giving us not only the thrill of being on stage but also a glimpse into what it’s like to perform in professional venues. These opportunities have shaped our growth as dancers and deepened our passion for the art.”

The Showcase brought together a wide variety of performances, allowing students to share their learning with family, friends, and the school community. It also highlighted key principles of the High Potential and Gifted Education (HPGE) framework. Students demonstrated:

- **Original thinking and creativity** through choreography and musical interpretation.
- **Curiosity and deep engagement** when exploring artistic themes and styles.
- **Emotional expression** by communicating meaning through movement and music.
- **Collaboration and independence** in both ensemble and solo performances.

Events such as the Showcase provide authentic opportunities for students to extend their skills, take on new challenges, and build confidence as performers. We congratulate all who took part for their commitment, artistry, and hard work in making the evening a success.



Bringing Stories to Life: Drama Mid-Year Showcase at The Lennox

In June 2025, Drama students took to the stage at The Lennox – Riverside Theatre, performing a diverse range of scenes and scripted works. The Showcase highlighted the growth of students as actors, while giving them the unique experience of performing in a professional theatre environment.

The evening reflected core principles of the High Potential and Gifted Education (HPGE) framework, particularly within the Creative domain. Students demonstrated:

- **Originality and innovation** in their interpretations of characters and scripts.
- **Curiosity and engagement** as they explored complex ideas through performance.
- **Persistence and commitment** throughout rehearsals and preparation.
- **Advanced communication skills** in conveying meaning clearly to an audience.

By applying classroom learning in an authentic context, students not only developed confidence as performers, but also gained an appreciation for the discipline and teamwork required in live theatre. The Showcase was a powerful reminder of the creativity and commitment our Drama students bring to their craft.



Showcasing High Potential: Hawkesbury Eisteddfod

This term, our Concert Band and Vocal Ensemble proudly represented Northmead CAPA High School at the Hawkesbury Eisteddfod, performing at the Windsor Function Centre. Their achievements on stage highlighted both their dedication to performance and the principles of the High Potential and Gifted Education (HPGE) framework in the Creative domain.

The HPGE framework recognises creativity as the ability to produce work that is original, imaginative, and purposeful. At the Eisteddfod, our students demonstrated these qualities through innovative interpretations, expressive intent, and artistic flair. The event also provided an authentic opportunity for students to extend their learning beyond the classroom, embracing challenges, taking creative risks, and building independence in their artistic choices.

Participation in the Eisteddfod reflected key HPGE strategies, including:

- **Advanced repertoire and interpretive freedom** – tackling technically demanding works while developing their own interpretations.
- **Leadership and collaboration** – taking on solo and ensemble leadership roles to demonstrate initiative and teamwork.
- **Persistence and resilience** – performing with professionalism while managing nerves and striving for excellence.

Events like the Hawkesbury Eisteddfod allow students to connect with like-minded peers, experience accomplishment, and develop lasting confidence as creative learners. We are incredibly proud of our students for their courage, creativity, and commitment to excellence.



Celebrating Creativity: Visual Arts Mid-Year Exhibition

On the evening of July 2, more than 200 students from Years 7–11 showcased their creativity and skills at our Mid-Year Visual Arts Exhibition. The exhibition featured an impressive range of works, including paintings, drawings, sculptures, digital art, mixed media, and pieces from our Visual Design and Photography courses.

The event drew tremendous support from parents, staff, and fellow students, creating a vibrant community atmosphere that celebrated the hard work and achievements of our aspiring artists. More than just an exhibition, the evening highlighted the critical role that Visual Arts plays in fostering self-expression, innovation, and original thinking—skills that are particularly vital in an age where creativity is evolving alongside AI-generated art.





Nishita Shekhar
Bijamwar - Year 11



Oscar Scople -
Year 11



Aabha Saraf
- Year 9

Mini Mid-Year Showcase



Austin Roach
- Year 11



Chaarvi Modi-
Year 7

This exhibition was a fitting celebration of the dedication shown by our Visual Arts students over the past two terms. We congratulate everyone who took part and thank our school community for helping to make the event such a success.

Art in Action: Extending Skills through Art Company

CAPA Visual Arts students have been extending their technical, creative, and collaborative skills through their involvement in Art Company, a program that allows young artists to apply their talents in both group and individual projects.

Currently, students are working together on a vibrant banner design for the upcoming Colour Run, bringing their creativity to a school-wide event. In addition, small groups have collaborated on the creation of murals around the school, transforming shared spaces with original and imaginative designs. Alongside these projects, students have pursued personal works, developing skills in areas of individual interest and exploring their own artistic styles.

Art Company reflects the principles of the HPGE program, offering students authentic opportunities to engage in creative problem-solving, teamwork, and self-directed learning. Through these projects, students not only refine their artistic techniques but also contribute meaningfully to the culture and identity of our school community.



Excellence on Stage: Dance Eisteddfod Success

On 27 June 2025, 61 of our Dance Ensemble and Dance Company students proudly represented Northmead CAPA High School at the Sydney Performing Arts Competition Experience held at the Chatswood Concourse. Performing against some of the most competitive schools in the region, our dancers showcased extraordinary talent, professionalism, and school spirit.

As Year 10 Dance student Mikayla reflected:

"I've been competing in Dance Eisteddfods every year since starting as a Year 7 CAPA Dance student in 2022. I love showcasing our school's talent and Dance ensemble/company routines against other schools, and I'm so proud that we consistently achieve top placings, including 1st, 2nd and 3rd."

This year's results were outstanding, and we warmly congratulate all performers for their dedication and artistry. Special mentions include:

Ballet Ensemble – La Bayadère, choreographed by Miss Cullen – 2nd Place

Contemporary Ensemble – Northern Attitude, choreographed by Bella Simpson – 2nd Place

Dance Company – To Build A Home, choreographed by Miss Elliott – 2nd Place

Dance Company – Parlez Vous Français, choreographed by Tamsyn Craig – 3rd Place

Dance Company – Night to Remember, choreographed by Tamsyn Craig – 4th Place



Participation in dance competitions offers authentic opportunities for high-potential students to extend and challenge themselves. These experiences build artistic breadth by exposing students to diverse choreographic styles and professional standards, while also challenging them to demonstrate technical mastery, adaptability, and performance quality under pressure. Perhaps most importantly, students learn resilience, discipline, and sportsmanship—skills that extend far beyond the stage.

We are immensely proud of our dancers, whose passion and commitment continue to set such a high benchmark for excellence in the performing arts.

Shining on Stage: Hills Dance Festival 2025

On 27 August 2025, Northmead CAPA High School dancers wowed audiences at the Hills Performing Arts Festival held at Penrith Panthers. Our Dance Company, Contemporary Ensemble, and Ballet Ensemble delivered stunning performances that highlighted their talent, dedication, and professionalism. Each group brought artistry and energy to the stage, earning admiration from both the audience and peers.

A heartfelt thank you goes to all of our Dance CAPA students for their commitment and hard work. Your creativity, passion, and stage presence continue to inspire and showcase the excellence of our performing arts program.

Year 11 student Annie reflected on her experience:

“I love performing at Hills Festival because the energy of the crowd and the excitement of being on stage make it such a fun and unforgettable experience. Being part of the Cotton Eye Joe dance this year let me show off my personality and connect with my friends as well as the audience. Dancing at the Hills Festival was a truly memorable experience.”



Events like the Hills Festival not only celebrate performance but also exemplify the principles of the HPGE framework, as students extend themselves through collaboration, originality, and authentic performance opportunities in a professional setting.

Captivating the Stage: Synergy Dance Festival

On 17 June 2025, Northmead CAPA High School's Dance students captivated audiences at the annual Synergy Public Schools Dance Festival, held at Penrith Panthers.

Our talented performers presented two stunning works: Miss Elliott's Dance Company piece *To Build a Home* and Miss Burton's Jazz Ensemble piece *Abracadabra*. Both items showcased the artistry, skill, and professionalism of our students, who represented the school with pride and passion.

These performances also reflected the principles of the HPGE framework, as students demonstrated creativity, persistence, and collaboration in a professional setting that challenged them to extend their skills and artistry.

As Year 10 student Jasmine reflected:

"I've been performing at the Synergy Dance Festival since starting at Northmead CAPAHS as a Year 7 CAPA Dance student in 2022. I love the opportunity to perform in a professional setting like the Evan Theatre at Penrith Panthers, and I feel proud to be part of a CAPA Dance Ensemble that gives me the chance to showcase my skills on such prestigious stages."



Congratulations to all of our dancers and teachers for their dedication and for delivering such memorable performances at this year's festival.

Contact Us

If you would like more information about the HPGE Program or HPGE initiatives, or if you would like to bring any related matters to our attention, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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Visit us on the web at Northmead Creative and Performing Arts High School.

