

# Parramatters



Our vision is to provide a holistic 21<sup>st</sup> century education which develops resilient individuals who are active and informed citizens,

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On the 3rd of December 2018, nine aspiring students and Ms.Wu set out on a trip to the Parramatta campus of Western Sydney University to take part in their “ Year 8 Gifted and Talented Science Program”. The day started with speculations and curiosity. Remarks like, “I think the university will be massive!”, “Will we compete against the other schools?”, “I bet they have electron microscopes”, were frequently popping up in conversations throughout the journey to the university. As the M52 from Parramatta rumbled to a stop, nine students with big ideas and expectations stood to marvel at the glimpse of a great white building with larger opportunities within. This is what we, Ved, Parva, Hansh, Johann, Shlena, Amrita, Japesh, Sricharan and Lanthian experienced during our memorable time at Western Sydney University.

Upon our arrival, we were greeted with warm and welcoming smiles by the staff and university students. There were six other high schools alongside ours and our task was to collaborate. This encompassed attempting various kinds of experiments in three different laboratories of the university called “Colour, Create and Cool”. We were assigned to work with those of Penrith High School thus, opening a huge window for learning, exchanging information and working together. In pairs, we experienced a series of practical experiments under the supervision of the extremely flamboyant university students. As time flew, we created dry-ice fire extinguishers, nylon polymers and attempted various other fun-filled and

interesting experiments. In addition, our visit also allowed us to question various staff and students to understand their perception of science, thus making us realise how diverse and enjoyable the vast subject really is.

Purple fires, liquid nitrogen ice creams, colour changing flowers and gloves that expanded magically really made us think about, ”what not to enjoy?”. Practicals that we particularly enjoyed were those that involved us, students, to produce something, marvel at the results and ask the scientific questions. Students got the opportunity to make slime and taste ice cream made from liquid nitrogen (which was the highlight of the day for many!). Apart from all this, we students really got a chance to interact with students not only from other schools but also our own. We got the opportunity to communicate with peers whom we hadn’t interacted with earlier. Thus, at the end of the day, we weren’t students from our separate classes, but from one school.

While a few things did bring life to the excursion, what we enjoyed most could only be the Science! The main goal of our journey was engaging with other schools and building our base in an often feared subject. This “mission” brought joy and colour into the subject which we often associate with boredom and complexity.

Throughout this experience, we have taken away a heap of information through practical activity. What’s most important however was the fact that all nine of us were more than ever keen to learn more, keep exploring and apply our knowledge in the real world, which was, ultimately, the chief aim of our excursion.



