

## **Mr Joe Blackwell, Co-ordinator of Design and Technology and STEM**



*I have had a keen interest in making things from an early age, no doubt as a result of seeing my father and grandfather constantly tinkering in the garage. I always wanted to know what things were made from, how they worked and why. Teaching wasn't my first career choice, but when being a stuntman seemed a bit unrealistic, I turned to the more practical option of attaining a Bachelor of Arts with joint honours in Design and Technology and Outdoor Studies.*

*At the completion of my studies I considered various paths before deciding that teaching was the one that would enable me to best use both parts of my degree. Recalling the teachers who had been positive influences on me in Secondary School confirmed my choice and I decided to complete a Post Graduate Certificate of Education in Design and Technology.*

*I am now in my 17<sup>th</sup> year of teaching both in the UK and here in Australia. I have had periods as both a classroom teacher and Head of Department and have come to realise that the thing I enjoy the most, is driving excellence and seeing the students progress and thrive through experience and understanding. Students bring so much diversity and innovation and there is nothing like that lightbulb moment when they grasp a concept or the smile of achievement when they've created something special or done well in a project or exam.*

*Being the Head of TAS and STEM at Pittwater House gives me the opportunity to engage and excite the students about the constantly changing and hugely diverse world around them, across a wide range of mediums. I hope that working with the like-minded TAS department, we can drive curiosity, structure and knowledge to help them achieve their goals and future desires, most of which haven't yet been created.*

## **Ms Nicole McInerney, Co-ordinator of Music**



*I have come to Pittwater House from St Joseph's College Hunters Hill and am excited about my new role as Co-ordinator of Music K-12.*

*I have taught at many independent schools in Sydney, Newcastle and London, where I lived for 5 years.*

*I graduated from the University of Newcastle with a Bachelor of Education (Music) and am currently studying my Master of Education at UNSW and plan to finish this year.*

*I am the 8<sup>th</sup> of 9 children and have one child of my own. He is 9 and I am also his Rugby coach at Hunters Hill Juniors. We both share a love for The Avengers, especially Iron Man.*

*After work life, I plan to buy a farm, wear gumboots every day and rescue dogs.*

## **Ms Megan Das, English**

*"The journey of a lifetime starts with the turning of a page."*

*Rachel Anders*



*On my journey in the classroom, I have been teaching English for over 20 years in public and private schools across Sydney. One of the reasons I became an English teacher was to pass on a love of reading and learning with my students. I have always enjoyed reading books from an early age and treasure my memories of immersing myself into another world on the pages in books. Now I get to do this every day in the classroom! I am lucky enough to have found a career that I love and is so rewarding. I never feel like my job is work. I simply love what I do and get to read and teach some great books on my voyages through the classroom.*

*My leisure time and favourite things to do are spending time with my family and travelling in the school holidays with my husband, daughter and dog. I also enjoy rising early in the morning and going for a long walk, listening to various podcasts and music. I am always on the search for a great cup of coffee. Dark chocolate is my favourite food to indulge in.*

*I am very excited about my next journey teaching at The Pittwater House School. The English Department are fabulous and fun. I am looking forward to working with such an energetic and innovative department.*

### **Dr Audrey Copeland, Science**



*Born in France, I graduated with a Master in Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. I moved to Australia in 2005 to undertake my doctorate in Tree Ecophysiology with the CSIRO and the University of Tasmania. I spent 7 years as a researcher looking at the impact of elevated CO<sub>2</sub> on the growth of eucalypt trees. I am the lead author of 15 scientific peer-reviewed publications in the field of forestry. My life became very busy with 3 children; so in 2017, I decided to change career and go back to university and become a science teacher. I am building my teaching practice around inquiry based learning and want the students to have fun engaging and experimenting with scientific concepts.*