

November 2020

LEA SERVICE AWARD

Gaye Bender

**For services to Lutheran schooling
1988 – 2020**

The Lutheran Church of Australia thankfully acknowledges the faithful and committed service of Gaye Bender to Lutheran education for almost 33 years.

Gaye's heart for God is evident in her interactions with staff, students and the wider Grace community. We have been blessed by her graciousness in everything she has contributed. Gaye has seen many changes at Grace Lutheran College over the years. She has transitioned across various roles, and has shown extensive skill in supporting a wide range of staff.

When the college made the decision to move to a sub school model, it was an easy decision to place Gaye at Reception where she quickly became the heartbeat of the middle school office and has continued to do so ever since.

Gaye's years of service have allowed her the opportunity to demonstrate her servant heart for others. No task has been too big or too small, from cleaning to daily reception tasks to consoling crying students and supporting staff. Gaye embodies the fruits of the spirit in every aspect of her personal and working life. Gaye has a passion to connect with students beyond the reception desk – a willing participant and volunteer at social events and particularly at year 8 girls' camp has afforded the opportunity.

What you see is what you get with Gaye. She is honest, genuine and diplomatic in her interactions with students, staff and parents. Her wisdom and firm faith in God permeate her conversations and she is readily sought by students and staff. Everyone knows where to find compassion, care and a listening ear. There are many adjectives that can be used to describe Gaye: committed, dedicated, self-sacrificing, faithful and loyal.

Grace Lutheran College has been blessed by contributions Gaye has made to the community in so many aspects. Her loyalty, flexibility and conviction have made her a true asset to the college. As students reflect on their time at Grace, Mrs Bender has been, and will continue to be, a treasured memory to them thanks to her infectious positivity and reliable listening ear.

Gaye's faithful and conscientious service to the Lutheran Church of Australia, through her service in Lutheran education, has been outstanding and is humbly recognised through this Award.

**Assoc Prof Lisa Schmidt
Executive Director
Lutheran Education Australia**

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