

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS** ADVERTISING FEATURE

# Embracing boarding life

**MCDONALD COLLEGE**

SAFIA Nassar from Cooma, NSW certainly thinks she is one of the luckiest boarders in Sydney.

She joined The McDonald College as a year 10 boarder last year and can't believe her luck.

Moving from the country to the city has been a big change, but it's a change that Safia feels has been immensely beneficial.

"The biggest surprise for me has been learning I can push myself to limits that I never thought possible," said Safia.

"And being here has opened up my eyes to so many more opportunities."

Safia said she immediately felt welcomed with other boarders taking her under their wing and showing her around.

She found a "bestie" straight away - a girl from Parkes in the same year, who's also in the dance stream.

Five days a week, they take classes in jazz, ballet, hip hop and contemporary. Safia takes an elective with the Sydney Dance Company



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every Tuesday and hopes one day to dance with them.

Asked about how she balances academics with dance, Safia said: "It is a challenge but being a boarder helps. We have one and half hours every night dedicated to study or prep. I get so much

more done now."

The boarders are expected to help with light chores around the house, but Safia tells us, "it's just on us to contribute. No one's policing it.

"If there's dishes out, we'll stack the dishwasher.....mum loves it when I go home now.

She says 'Wow, you are a new person!'"

Safia is not alone when she says that the head of boarding Ms Rogers is "an angel".

"She treats us all equally," said Safia. "And she just gets us."

Safia's younger brother

who's in year 7 back in Cooma is joining the college next term.

"He's developed a passion for music and I'm sure he'll love it," Safia said.

She said to any families considering boarding at McDonald: "If your child is

passionate about performing arts, tennis or gym - or their academics - and you think they might be suited to the school, you just have to come, it's honestly the best."

For more information visit the school's website [www.mcdonald.nsw.edu.au](http://www.mcdonald.nsw.edu.au)