

SCUBA DIVING@GISS

Since early 2020 some children at GISS ticked another box on their adventure list by learning to scuba dive with John.

Some even used this activity as a part of the CAS program, aiming to become engaged in an activity that would challenge them physically and mentally. One of the children was Merrick Bethke, who successfully completed the PADI Open Water Diver (OWD) course during his IB CAS program, choosing it as a CAS "Action" activity and even extended his experiences with a boat dive, off Sydney's North Head, together with Maximilian and Florian Gabriel. Max and Florian completed their OWD and continued to train with John and in July 2021 completed the PADI Advanced Scuba Diver course, allowing them to go on deeper adventures.

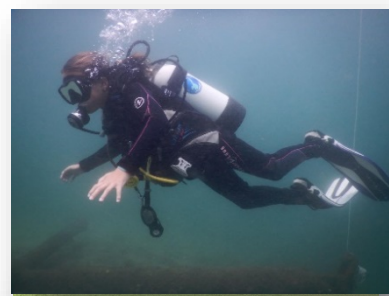
Apart from learning to master the skills of any eventuality for an emergency situation, the children also learned scuba diving through experiential experiences, by organising scientific dives off Shelly Beach, night and exploration dives off Freshwater Rockpool and deeper dives in Chowder Bay at Mosman.

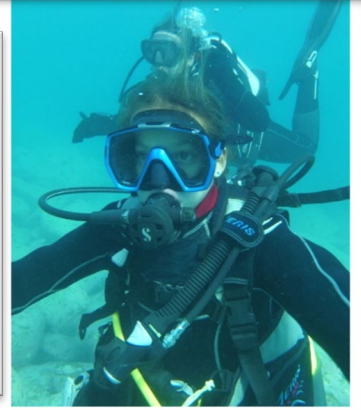
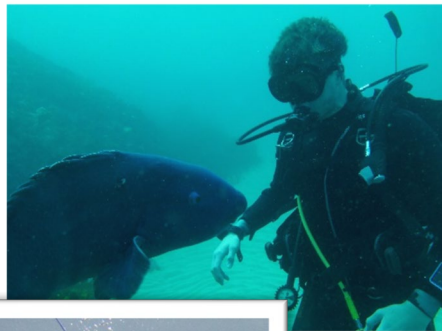
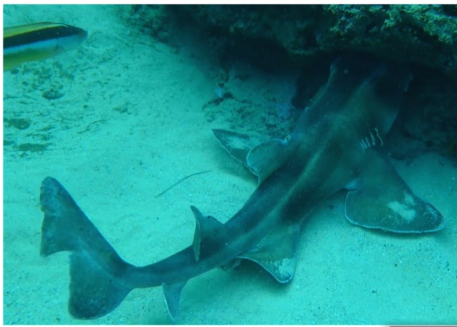
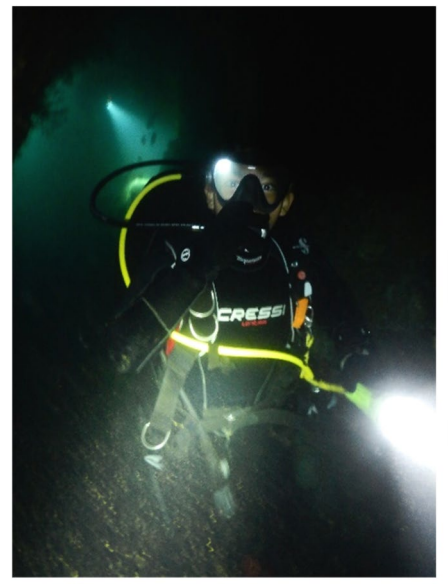
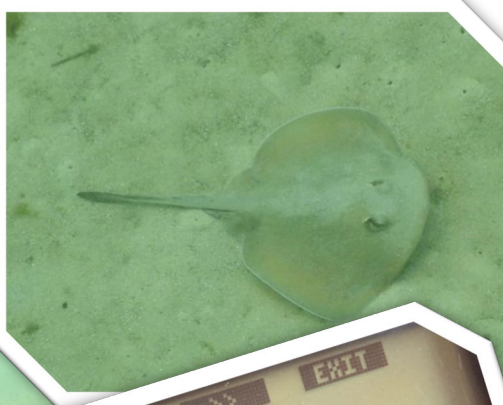
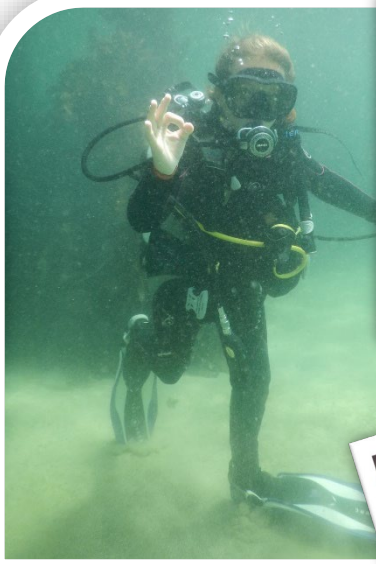
Based on philosophies of outdoor learning experiences, which in essence states that individuals are usually more capable (mentally, emotionally and physically) than they perceive themselves to be, John teaches scuba diving as an expert PADI Master Scuba Diver Trainer and former military personal, in a supportive atmosphere, where the student divers discover this excellence within themselves."

Many more children at GISS joined the scuba diving sport, like Sienna with brother Daniel, Sebastian L., Torben, Shayan, Bijan, Jubin, Maria Elena with her friends, some now picking up scuba diving together with their parents.

A few others already hold a scuba licence, like Lola and some of our teaching staff, including our principal, came together for social dives and to explore our local underwater world, all collaborating and playing together.

What else to expect..., ask the children at school who learnt to dive and enjoy reading what they had to say.







CAS Report by Merrick October 15, 2020 11:07 AM Diving Challenge & Skills Collaborative Skills Commitment & Perseverance Strength & Growth

This most recent diving trip took place during the two week holidays between term 3 and 4 in Manly. This diving trip was different from the other I took because it was from a boat rather than the beach or pier. Accompanying me on this dive was Max and Florian Gabriel as well as John. To begin with, we got suited up and equipped on the beach and then we made our way through the water to the boat which then drove us all the way to between north head and south head. Entering the water was also very different from the normal dives I took because the water this far out was very rough at the surface and it could cause the group to separate or one of us to hit the boat, so we descended one by one while holding the anchor of the boat all the way to the depth of 20 meters.

The area that we descended into was called "Sponge Garden" because the entire surface of the floor and rocks was covered colourful sponges. After a while of swimming around, we encountered a huge group of sharks consisting of Port Jackson sharks, that were just lying together on the sea bed and just a few meters next to that we spotted a gigantic 2-3 meter Wobbegong shark hiding under a rock. I was under the impression that this was the deepest dive we did yet due to us being able to take the boat far out. Using the boat was also much more calm as you could rest after the dive and before you had to carry all of the heavy equipment out of the water.



It is very brave of the children at GISS to learn to scuba dive and to commit and to challenge themselves with this very physically and also mentally challenging activity. Especially, as they are submerged into the unknown, sometimes dark cold water, they are tested in how much they would trust themselves and their own abilities, and of course to trust me, John as their trainer. All of them proved very well that they were capable to make good decisions, becoming a safe dive partner for others and a respectful carer for the underwater environment here in Sydney. Very often the children learnt a lot about themselves and to control strong emotions by mastering scuba diving skills.

