



Information For Parents

Debating Program

2026

Debating

Welcome to SCEGGS Darlinghurst Debating for the 2026 season – I am sure it will be another fun and successful one for us. There are several debating programmes that are run here at SCEGGS, and there are opportunities for everyone who wishes to be involved.

Students involved in competitive inter-school debates will debate in either:

1. The Eastside or ISDA competition on Friday nights in Terms I and II, or
2. The Archdale competition on Tuesday nights in Terms II and III.
3. Depending on numbers, some students may debate in both competitions. Furthermore, other competitions may be considered, potentially for Term 4.
4. Social debating may be run if we have an influx of numbers. If possible, inter-school social debating via Zoom may be organised.

More details concerning debating at SCEGGS are provided below.

Debating is a wonderful activity, and an excellent opportunity for students to develop their analytical skills and self-confidence.

If you have any questions or need further information, please do not hesitate to contact the Debating Coordinator, Ms Suvini Kottegoda at Debating@SCEGGS.nsw.edu.au

2026 Debating Sign Up

To apply for Debating, please complete the form via [Clipboard](#) titled “2026 Debating – Secondary”.

Permission Note

To travel to other schools for debating, this electronic permission note needs to be filled out via this link:

[7-12 Permission Form - Debating Competitions 2026 – Fill out form](#)

Please fill this out electronically by Friday, 30th January 2026 by 4.00 pm.



Debating – General Information

- Students may participate in lessons focused on debating skills, including argument construction, rebuttal, public speaking, and critical thinking.
- Students must commit to regular at-home practice, including research, speech writing, and rehearsal.
- Debating tuition is optional, and students are not obliged to learn from school-based debating coaches.
 - Students are encouraged to consider the study of debating formats that are most needed in competitions, such as British Parliamentary, Policy, Lincoln-Douglas, and World Schools.
- Students are encouraged to maintain their relationship with any current external debating competitions and/or clubs.
- Students are best supported by a single debating coach; therefore, we do not advise students to have external coaches in addition to their school-based debating coach.
- Secondary students will advise their classroom teachers that they will be absent for the final 10-15 minutes of a lesson prior to it taking place and catch up on any missed work in their own time. This will only occur if the competition is at a campus further away from Darlinghurst.
- The Debating Department cannot recommend coaches outside of the School community.

Trials and Information Sessions

- For Year 7, there will be an extended Introduction to High School Debating sessions run on Monday, 3rd February (Week 2), from 3:10pm – 5:30pm. This session is for anyone who might be interested in debating or who wants to learn more about the activity.
- Trial dates for 2026 will be held in the OG Building:
 - Year 7 will then be held on Friday 6th February, from 3:10pm – 5:00pm.
 - Year 8 – 10 will be held on Monday, 2nd February, from 3.10pm – 5.00pm
 - Year 11 – 12 will be held on Monday, 9th February from 3.10pm – 5.00pm
- There will be opportunities for all debaters to practice their speaking skills, and students should attend regardless of whether they have experience debating or not.
- For Years 10-12 there will be a practice debate on Friday, 6th February 2026 in Week 2, from 3:10 pm – 5:30 pm.

Training

- Training for Years 7-9 takes place on Monday afternoon from 3:10pm – 5:00pm and will be held in the OG Building.
- Year 10-12 debaters should talk to their coaches about what training commitments can work with their studies.
- For Year 7, the first training session of the year will be held on Monday,
- For Years 8-9, the first training session of the year will be held on Monday 9th February, from 3:10pm – 5:00pm.
- Training will begin for all teams on **Monday, 9th February 2026** and is compulsory for all students in Year 7 – 9. If students are unable to attend training, they must email their coach in advance and CC debating@sceeggs.nsw.edu.au.
- There is an expectation that Year 10 students organise a training afternoon with their coach to begin in Week 3, Term 1, 2026. Senior students are welcome to train from 3.15pm prior to debating on Friday evenings – dependent on agreement with their coach.
- Students and parents can refer to the “Debating Commitment Policy.

Competitive Debating

- SCEGGS Darlinghurst participates in three external inter-school competitions. Both the ISDA and Eastside competitions are held on Friday afternoons during Terms I and II, and the Archdale competition is held on Tuesday afternoons in Terms II and III. All involve 'impromptu' debates, where students receive the topic 45 minutes before the debate and then must prepare their cases without their coach and with no access to outside material.
- There is one team for each year group in Eastside and ISDA, and there is an additional team in both the Year 7 and Year 8 division for Archdale. Each team has approximately six debaters. If the numbers permit, different teams will be selected for the competitions to ensure as many students as possible can be involved in debating.
- When the debate is at SCEGGS it is expected that all members of the team turn up to help host, support their team, and 'run' the debates as a chairperson or timekeeper.

Eastside Competition: Term 1 – 2 (Friday evening)

- The Eastside competition on Friday afternoons includes the following schools in the Eastern Suburbs: Sydney Boys' High school, Sydney Girls' High Schools, The Scots College, Reddam House, Sydney Grammar School, Rose Bay College, Cranbrook, and SCEGGS.
- Training takes place with coaches before the debates begin. Years 7-9 have their preparation time from 5:30pm and then debate from 6:15pm – 7:15pm, and Years 10-12 prepare from 6:30pm and debate from 7:15pm – 8:30pm.
- When the debate is not at SCEGGS a bus will take students to the host school. For this competition, debaters need to be collected at the conclusion of their debate.
- It is compulsory for students to attend home debates from Years 7-10, unless communicated to the coach and Debating Coordinator prior.

Eastside Competition Dates

Round 1	Friday 27 th February – SCEGGS (host) v Rose Bay	Round 6	Friday 24 th April – Sydney Girls High School (host) v SCEGGS
Round 2	Friday 6 th March – Cranbrook (host) v SCEGGS	Round 7	Friday 1 st May – SCEGGS (host) v Reddam
Round 3	Friday 13 th March – SCEGGS (host – TBA) v The Scots School	Makeup Round	Friday 8 th May
Round 4	Friday 20 March – SCEGGS (host) v Sydney Grammar School	Semi Finals	Friday 15 th May (SGS and Reddam hosting)
Round 5	Friday 27 March – SBHS (Sydney Boys High School) (host) v SCEGGS	Grand Final	Friday 22 nd May (SGS hosting)
<u>BREAK FOR SCHOOL HOLIDAYS</u>			

ISDA Competition: Term 1 – 2 (Friday evening)

The ISDA competition involves 32 Independent Schools in Sydney and takes place on Friday afternoons. Again, training takes place with coaches before the debates begin. Years 7-9 prepare for their debate at 5:45pm and debate from 6:30pm – 7:30pm. Year 10, and the Senior A and B teams, prepare or their debate at 6:45pm and debate from 7:30pm – 8:45pm.

When the venue for the debate is not at SCEGGS a bus will take the students to the host school and will return any students who need transport back to SCEGGS. It is compulsory for students to attend home debates from Years 7-10, unless communicated to the coach and Debating Coordinator prior.

ISDA Competition Dates – 2026

Round 1	Friday 13 February – Brigidine (host) v SCEGGS	Makeup Round	Friday 24 th April – Knox Grammar (host swap) v SCEGGS
Round 2	Friday 21 st February – Queenwood (host) v SCEGGS	Octofinals 1	Friday 1 st May – SCEGGS hosting
Round 3	Friday 27 th February – Ravenswood (host) v SCEGGS	Octofinals 2	Friday 8 th May
Round 4	Friday 6 th March – SCEGGS (host) v Cranbrook	Quarter Finals	Friday 15 th May
Round 5	Friday 13 th March – Monte (host) v SCEGGS	Semi Finals	Friday 22 nd May
Round 6	Friday 20 th March – SCEGGS (host) v Ascham	Grand Final	Friday 29 th May
Round 7	Friday 27 th March – <i>Rescheduled</i>		
<u>BREAK FOR SCHOOL HOLIDAYS</u>			

Archdale Competition – Term 2 – 3 (Tuesday Evening)

The Archdale competition involves 23 Independent Girls' Schools in Sydney and takes place on Tuesday afternoons. Again, training takes place with coaches before the debates begin. Year 7 and 8 prepare for their debate from 4:45pm and debate from 5:30pm – 6:30pm. Years 9-12 prepare from 5:45pm and debate from 6:30pm – 7:45pm.

When the venue for the debate is not at SCEGGS, a bus will take the students to the host school and will return any students who need transport back to SCEGGS. It is compulsory for students to attend home debates from Years 7-10, unless communicated to the coach and Debating Coordinator prior.

Archdale Competition Dates – 2026

Round 1	Tuesday 5 May	Round 7	Tuesday 16 June
Round 2	Tuesday 12 May	<u>BREAK FOR SCHOOL HOLIDAYS</u>	
Round 3	Tuesday 19 May	Rescheduled	Tuesday 28 July
Round 4	Tuesday 26 May	Tiebreakers	Tuesday 4 August
Round 5	Tuesday 2 June	Quarter Finals	Tuesday 11 August
Round 6	Tuesday 9 June	Semi Finals	Tuesday 18 August
		Grand Final	Tuesday 25 August

Inter-House Debating

- Debating is also an important inter-house competition.
- The Senior Competition (Years 10-12) is held in Term II, and the Junior Competition (Year 7-9) is held in Term III. Both divisions involve impromptu and prepared debates.
- Teams are organised by House Officials.

Debating Enquiries

Suvini Kottagoda (Social Sciences Teacher and Debating Coordinator) – debating@sceggs.nsw.edu.au

