

The 1980's under Miss Charmaine Pountney

Unlike four of the previous Headmistresses, Miss Pountney was not an Old Girl – she was a former dux of Epsom Girls' Grammar School. Prior to taking up her appointment in 1978, her teaching career had been in co-education.

AGGS experienced many new directions over the next few years. To begin with the changes were only minor e.g. the girls no longer curtseyed at prizegiving and stood rather than knelt at assemblies. A more far reaching change was the introduction in 1980 of a group system of class organization (banding). This was a first step against streaming students on the basis of academic ability. Samoan was introduced as a language in the early 1980s along with Technicraft and horticulture and Classical studies and journalism were introduced in the senior school in 1984. Computing was also added to the curriculum.

Since the first entry in the annual Secondary Schools' Polynesian Festival in 1977, groups from AGGS have excelled. In 1986 and 1987 AGGS won the David Gluckman Cup for the highest overall marks in the festival. Throughout the 80s the school's cultural groups performed at a number of Conferences, churches and other public occasions. In 1986 the Maori Club opened the Rainbow Warrior Concert at Mt Smart Stadium and in the same year a group from the club paid a two week visit to Australia performing at a number of schools.

The first Samoan Head Prefect, Olive Brown, was appointed in 1980 and the first Maori Head Prefect, Elizabeth Te Amo in 1986.

In 1983 a whare wananga was built in the school grounds and in 1987 after consultation with parents and the Maori community, a special third form Maori class, Ng Tumanako o Kahurangi was set up in which all subjects were taught either in Maori or in a bi-cultural manner.

The new school hall and theatre, aptly named the Dorothy Winstone Centre, after old girl and champion of the school, Dame Dorothy Winstone, who was instrumental in raising funds for the building, was opened by the Governor General on October 16 1988.