



Staff profiles

Learners at St. Gilgen International School enjoy the talents of an exceptionally gifted Faculty of teachers. As our school continues to gently expand, we have enriched this pool of talent with still more remarkable educators.



Gary Allen

Gary is a Canadian, educated at Simon Fraser University (BSc, Physics), and the University of British Columbia (MAsc, Environmental Engineering and BEd, Physics and Math). Gary has taught overseas for several years in Istanbul, Hannover, Port Moresby, Kuala Lumpur and now St. Gilgen, in the lovely Salzkammergut. Gary enjoys walking and hiking, cycling, skiing, Mozart, and fine Austrian kuchen and is looking forward to a great year with fine students and colleagues.

Peter Bennett

Peter Bennett is a teacher of English and Economics and holds a Master of Education from University of Melbourne. He has taught in day, boarding and international schools in Australia and abroad. He has spent time in India with international students working on aid projects, and travelled extensively within South East Asia.

He fell in love with the German speaking world during his seven years teaching the I.B. at Schule Schloss Salem in Germany, where he met his future wife Stefanie.

Peter is an enthusiastic swimmer, keen ski-mountaineer and hiker. As a passionate cyclist he has the self-destructive habit of riding unnecessarily long distances just to see if he can, although he always swears never to do it again.





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Warwick Botrall

Warwick is an Australian citizen from the state of Victoria and has lived in a small town called 'Ballarat' for the past 15 years. He graduated from the University of Ballarat in the mid 90's and more recently undertook his Masters of Educational Leadership from Australian Catholic University.

Warwick is qualified with a Bachelor of Education B.Ed. in Physical Education / Health; and a Masters of Educational Leadership M.Ed. His subject specialities are in Physical Education, Sports Science, Health/wellbeing and Outdoor Education.

Warwick has taught in Austrian and Australian Ski schools (Ski instructor), Co-educational government sectors (Head of Faculty) and in the Catholic private school sector (Head of Faculty and Head of House). His hobbies revolve around most outdoor activities and adventure while his core interests are his family (Wife Trish, two boys Bailey and Mika and daughter Zali), Skiing, bikes, motorbikes and health.

Neil Bradley

Neil Bradley Studied at Loughborough University (BSc. Mathematics and Sports Science) and The University of Nottingham (PGCE in Mathematics). He has been teaching Mathematics for nine years in schools in the UK, New Zealand and Austria. He has taught all levels of secondary school Mathematics and has additionally prepared a number of students for Mathematics competitions such as the UK Maths Olympiad.

Originally from the UK he married Elisabeth Schoepf, an Austrian, in 2007 and moved to Austria in 2008. He enjoys the outdoors, would ski everyday in the winter if it were possible and is a motorcycle enthusiast. He plays tennis for the local tennis team and runs the school tennis activities.





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Christine Borrero

Christine Borrero is a New York City native. She received her M.S. from Mercy College and was a member of the NYC Teaching Fellows Program. Dually certified to teach Secondary Education and Special Education, she specializes in Humanities and English. She has over three years teaching experience and has led a small Academy in a Bronx Middle School. Christine is an obsessive reader, is aggressively learning German and was a member of an extremely amateur softball team.

Maia Bristol

Maia Bristol has dual English and Swiss nationalities. She studied French, Italian and European Studies at Bath University and later Translation and Interpreting at Bristol University in the UK. Before coming to St. Gilgen where her second child was born, she spent ten years working in the publishing industry; most recently managing the sales department at Faber and Faber.

Maia's connection with publishing continues from Austria as she acts as an independent consultant for a number of independent publishers alongside being a regular member of the judging panel for the innovative Bristol Short Story Prize. When not at school, she and her husband can be found enjoying the alpine environment with their 2 young children Louis and Freya. If there's ever a quiet moment Maia loves to mountain bike, hike, swim in the lakes and hurtle down hills on skis.





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Michael Chapman

Michael Chapman is the Headmaster of St. Gilgen International School. He is entering his twenty-first year of school leadership, having been designated as a 'National Leader of Education' in the UK in 2008. This is the highest accolade for school leaders and is reserved for those with a proven track record of outstanding learner achievement, success and innovation over an extended period. He is an elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, a university Honorary Research Fellow and his career has included a major national role leading the professional team implementing a flagship government policy in the UK on performance management.

When not working he is an adventure motorcyclist, having ridden extensively in some of the wildest places in the world. He crossed the mountains of Southern India in 2005, the Sahara desert in 2007 and the Himalayas to a height of 17,800 ft in the summer of 2008. He rode the Wild Coast of South Africa in the summer of 2009 to raise money for the UNICEF 'Born Free from HIV' campaign, as part of the first ever 'Enduro Africa Unplugged' rally. He has one daughter who has just graduated as an Architect.

Valerie Cicero

Valerie Cicero is from the USA where she graduated from Roosevelt University with a BA in Political Science. In addition she has an MA in International Relations from the International University of Japan and an MA in Teaching from Rockford College, USA. Her subject expertise is in History, International Relations and Political Science. Her hobbies and interests include travelling, books, music, movies, crafts, all new things and volunteering.





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Abby Davey

Abby Davey is from Adelaide, Australia and has been a teacher of English Literature and Theatre for 5 years. She has a Bachelor of Education and a Bachelor of Arts (Honours First Class) in English Literature from Flinders University. Abby is proud to be an identical twin, and despite living in different countries, she and her twin sister look very much alike! Abby likes to go on long walks, ice skate, wander the back streets of unknown places and read Jasper Fforde novels.

Thom Disney

Thom Disney graduated from the University of Kent at Canterbury in 2002, with a degree in Drama & Theatre Studies, specialising in Directing. He also undertook several weeks intensive Commedia dell'Arte training in France with Commedia authority John Rudlin. After graduating, Thom co-founded Velocet Theatre, performing in and directing several pieces of new theatre at the Edinburgh Festival and in London, between 2002-2004 and 2008. He trained as a teacher in London, where he worked for three years, before moving to teach for two years in a school in Sheffield, where he was able to indulge his passion for bouldering. Thom is also a keen runner, cyclist and footballer, and is looking forward to developing these interests in Austria.



James Earwood

James Earwood is from the USA where he graduated from Toccoa Falls College with a B.S. in Secondary History (History/Economics/Geography/Religious Studies). This was followed by two years teaching in Charlotte, North Carolina before he came to St. Gilgen. His hobbies and interests are extensive - History, reading, travelling, learning, American Football, Ultimate Frisbee, Disc Golf, running, lifting weights, fishing, healthy eating, skiing, friends, meeting new people, setting/achieving goals, positive attitudes, adventure. He is proud to be a Southerner!



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Agnes Fischer

Agnes Fischer is an Austrian married to an American. One of the founding staff at St Gilgen, this is her third year teaching German and Spanish. She studied English, Spanish and German for teaching in Graz, Austria. After graduating she taught English and Spanish at a Middle/High School in Graz. In 2003 she went to New Orleans, USA, where she taught German and English at the University of New Orleans and received her MA in English. She also taught Spanish and English at a high school outside of New Orleans. She is excited to be back in Austria, surrounded by beautiful mountains, as she loves hiking, skiing and being out in nature.

Kveta Fikar

Kveta graduated from University of Toronto, Canada with an Honours Degree in Science. She has taught Chemistry and Biology in Canada for many years. In recent years Kveta gained experience teaching in different international curricula in England, Germany, Papua New Guinea and Malaysia. Kveta is delighted to join the International school in St. Gilgen and enjoys sports and hiking and all kinds of cultural activities.



Ingo Göbel

Ingo Göbel, a native German, graduated in German Literature and History at the Potsdam University. In 1994, he went to Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he taught German at the Goethe School. This was followed by four years teaching at the United World College of the Atlantic, Wales, UK. He also spend a long time working in Hungary and Poland before coming to St. Gilgen. He is married, has three grown up children and six beautiful dogs. He is interested in gardening, playing tennis and watching soccer.



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Rachel Goldstein

Rachel hails from Los Angeles and graduated from Long Beach State University with a degree in German. She is now in her 12th year as an educator and began her journey teaching bilingual fifth grade in South Korea. She then moved on to teach high school Spanish and German for eight years. She loves to run, travel, cook and learn languages. Rachel is pleased to be here in a very different and interesting learning community.

Neal Gwynne

Neal Gwynne is from Scotland and studied at the University of Aberdeen (B.Sc. Neuroscience), the University of Wales, Bangor (P.G.C.E. Biology and Outdoor Activities) and Durham University (M.A. Education). He has worked in education for ten years in England and in Scotland where, as well as teaching Biology and Psychology, he established and ran Outdoor Education programmes. He is Head of Science at StGIS, teaches Biology and, as a qualified mountaineering and kayaking instructor, he will also be contributing to the activities programme. His other interests include the Arctic, exploring the world's wild places, water-skiing, yachting and opera.



Aleisha House

Aleisha's country of origin is home to the world's most beautiful beaches; Australia. Aleisha graduated from the University of Ballarat with a Bachelor of Education degree specialising in Primary Education. She has taught many year levels in primary education but has come to love working with years 5/6. She takes great pleasure and pride in developing new and engaging learning activities, particularly in Numeracy and Literacy, and she has coordinated teams of teachers in both of these areas. Aleisha also loves team sports (particularly Netball which she coaches) and she has a holistic view of the links between health, wellbeing and academic achievement. Aleisha thinks the most important thing in life is to look for the beauty that exists all around us and to approach all our adventures (big or small) with a positive attitude.



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Jeremy House

Jeremy House is from Australia and has a Bachelor of Education with Honours in Health & Physical Education (University of Ballarat) and a Master of Education in Health and Physical Education (Deakin University). He also has a Certificate IV in Fitness & Personal Training and a Certificate IV in Workplace Training and Assessment. He is a qualified Teacher of Swimming, has Water Safety & Lifeguard accreditation, Level 1 Coaching Certificates in Football and Cricket, First Aid Level II, and is part way through studies in Master of Business Administration. He has a love for all things active and is looking forward to continuing his skiing this winter.

Kirsty Lamont

Kirsty Lamont is from the West of England and graduated with a Degree in Fine Art from the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff in 2003. She then went on to graduate with a PGCE in Art and Design from the same University. Before joining StGIS in 2010, she enjoyed 4 years of teaching Art and Design in the UK. She specialises in painting and art history, but has a keen interest in and knowledge of ceramics, photography and printmaking. She is a keen amateur astronomer, currently working very slowly towards an Open University Astronomy Foundation.



Steffan Lamont

Steffan Lamont is from New Zealand where he originally studied at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch graduating with a Mechanical Engineering Degree (B.E.). He travelled overseas using his B.E. and then later returned to complete a Diploma of Teaching and Learning, majoring in Mathematics, at the College of Education in Christchurch. He has six years teaching experience working at a high achieving school in Christchurch. His interests range from kayaking, rock climbing, mountain biking, telemark skiing to multi day sea kayak trips.



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Paul Kearley

Paul Kearley began teaching in 1999 in a United Kingdom state boarding school after completing a BSc (Hons) in Science and Outdoor Education at Liverpool John Moore's University. In the last 11 years he has taught predominantly GCSE and A Level Physics and been Head of Science in his last two schools. He has also coached rugby and cricket teams and contributed to the extra-curricular programmes on offer. At St Gilgen Paul has a dual role of Physics teacher and Senior Administrator. He will also be putting his Outdoor Education training to good use by supporting the Adventure Activities programme.

Leaza May

Leaza May joined STGIS in September 2010 as housemistress to the junior girls and teacher of Economics. In the housemistress role she is strongly supported by her family; husband Neil, Millie, Daisy and George. Together they have developed a "home from home" atmosphere for the junior girls. As a teacher of Economics she has the pleasure of delivering the thought provoking and stimulating IB Economics programme at Standard and Higher levels. Leaza May is British and graduated in Economics from the University of Wales. She has 20 years of teaching experience. In previous appointments she has worked in New Zealand, Germany, South Africa and the UK. She has a passion for travelling, the outdoors and for an active and healthy lifestyle.



Claire Moore

Claire Moore is from the UK or New Zealand, depending on which sport is being played. She graduated from Victoria University in Wellington and has a postgraduate degree in English Literature, Film and Theatre. She has taught in the UK, India, Tanzania and Austria and thinks life would be perfect if you could watch lions whilst paddling in the Indian Ocean with the Austrian Alps at your back. Although she realises that combining reading and travelling can be dangerous, she would like to point out that when you end up in unlikely places, you meet the most fascinating people.



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Amanda Neiman

Amanda's home town is Christchurch, New Zealand and was educated at Canterbury University gaining a Bachelor of Commerce and a graduate diploma in teaching. Amanda has been teaching mathematics for 11 years and is looking forward to working at St. Gilgen. Amanda enjoys reading, musical theatre and travelling.

Aude Paulin

Originally from France, Aude grew up following an adapted school curriculum to allow intensive dance training at a national ballet school. Later on, she graduated from Bordeaux University with a BA in American and English Studies, as well as a 2 year diploma in Swedish Studies. She completed her Teacher Training in England and worked there for 10 years. French is her main subject, but she has also taught Spanish and coached rugby at U8/U10 levels. Language learning is, for her, a fascinating journey from understanding the various basis of speech to fully appreciating cultural differences. Recently settled in Salzburg-Land with her Austrian husband, she is attempting to learn the local dialect. When not at work, she makes time for loved ones, attends regular dance classes and travels.



Eva-Maria Preissler

Eva was born and raised in Bavaria. She studied French, English and Pedagogy at the universities of Augsburg, Paris (École Normale Supérieure) and Edinburgh and holds an M.A. (hons) in English Literature and French, as well as an MSc by research in 19th century French Literature. Her love for literature, languages and cultures has brought Eva to teach French, German and English at various Goethe-Institutes in France and Germany, a Lycée and Collège in France, an International school in Switzerland, the École Normale Supérieure in Paris as well as the University of Edinburgh. After eight years in Bonnie Scotland, Eva is looking forward to living in the centre of Europe again and can't wait to learn how to ski properly.



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Stefan Reichhardt

Stefan Reichhardt, born in Germany, graduated in German Literature and History at the Humboldt-University in Berlin. In 2008 he attended teacher training for German as a foreign language (DaF) at the International House Berlin Prolog. Ever since he has been teaching DaF for the Goethe Institute in Germany, Yaoundé/Cameroun and Kolkata/India. In table tennis, he is a representative of the dying art of the Defensive Efficiency Strategy.

Diana Taylor

Diana Taylor was born in the UK. Graduated from Southampton University with a B.Sc. in Geography, studied Norwegian glaciers for a Doctorate, and has a PGCE. She taught mainly Geography in a variety of boarding and day schools in the UK, then in India and France. A passion for mountains has influenced travel and homes. Dr Taylor's interests include travel, outdoor activities, reading, hand crafts and music. She is married with two children, Freya and Rhian.



Kirk Wadsworth

Kirk Wadsworth graduated from the University of Wales, Bangor, with a BSc (Hons) Sport Science degree. He commissioned into the Royal Engineers in 2001 and conducted Operational Tours to Kosovo and Iraq. His passions include Alpinism, Ski Mountaineering and Mountain Biking. When not outside, he enjoys good food, film and music. Kirk has a young family (Noah 2, Cooper 8 months) and is married to Kerri. Together they plan on settling in Austria and as a family, climbing one mountain at a time.



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Justin Wildridge

Born in London, Justin Wildridge exhibited a talent for music at an early age. His first instrument, at the age of six, was the Piano; later the clarinet and the saxophone. After finishing at school, Justin pursued his musical ambitions initially at Bath Spa University where he graduated with first class BA in Music and later at Nottingham University where he achieved his Doctorate in Musical Composition.

Justin has been a dedicated member of the teaching profession for over fifteen years, from Instrumental Specialist to Head of Academic Music in a wide variety of schools in the UK. Amongst his many passions, he particularly loves to be hiking in the mountains with his wife Maia and their two wonderful children Louis and Freya.

Clare Willey

Clare Willey is originally from the north east of England and graduated in German and Geography BA(Hons) from Bradford University. She also studied as an undergraduate for one year at the Wirtschaftsuniversitaet, Wien. After university she spent time working in both Germany and Scotland for an engineering company, before studying for a PGCE teaching qualification at Glasgow University.

She now has 16 years of teaching experience gained in both UK and international schools including Ecuador and Slovakia. She spent the last four years teaching Year 2 and was Deputy Head of a British International Primary School in Bratislava. She speaks German and Spanish and is passionate about teaching and learning.





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Andrew Woodman

Andrew Woodman is from the UK, having graduated from Bristol University with a BSc Hons. in Geography. He is passionate about Geography and loves trying to understand the complex interactions between people and places. He began his teaching career in Taiwan before returning to the UK to teach Geography. After 5 years teaching in Suffolk he went 'international' one more time, to Ecuador, Slovakia and now St Gilgen. He is passionate about the mountains.



Angela Wren

Angela Wren is from Austria where she graduated from Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz with an M.A. in Translation Studies (German, Spanish and English). She previously worked as a technical author and translator in Austria and Germany before coming to St Gilgen. Her interests include family, language, culture, anything to do with cross-cultural communication, singing, hiking, cooking, Scandinavia and Japan.

James Wren

James was born in Singapore from England where he graduated from the University of Worcester with a B.A Hon's in Art and Design (Focus on branding). He previously worked for design agencies in Austria, England, Germany and Hong Kong where his clients included Red Bull, eBay, USA TODAY and Toshiba. James has also taught Art and Design, worked for Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines and spent time as a freelance voice artist on motion pictures and radio commercials. It is this flair, coupled with real commercial experience that he brings to his Communication Design teaching at StGIS. Outside of school his world is Angela and Jeremy, design, walking in the woods, soul music and Indian food.





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Business Administration team and Support Staff



Stefanie Bennett

Stefanie Bennett grew up in the south of Germany enjoying an early career as a tomboy and has the scars to prove it. She has experience in secretarial and administrative roles in industry and education including marketing, accounts and admissions at Salem International College where she met her husband, Peter. In 2006 they moved to Australia where she worked, travelled and continued her studies in alternative healing.

Since leaving school she has developed a real passion for treating and helping others with her skills. She enjoys doing Qi Gong outdoors to recharge her batteries. She is also a very keen Salsa dancer, loves travelling and languages, reading, crafty things, bike riding, hiking and gardening.

Li Dietz

Li was born in Germany and grew up in a small town called Pappenheim in Bavaria (you might know it – it's mentioned in Friedrich Schiller's "Wallenstein"). She studied in Heidelberg and Munich and passed her exams in English for economic correspondence and Spanish for translation.

She worked in several international companies, mainly as an assistant to the managing board, in the purchasing department and project management department and as a freelancer. Besides this work she is trained in human relations and corporate strategies. In 2006 she moved to Vienna and in 2010 she decided to come back to the mountains and the lakes, even if they are not in Bavaria but in the Salzkammergut.

She is grateful to life and work in such close proximity in these beautiful surroundings. She is interested in people and their culture, she likes skiing, swimming and hiking, classical music and jazz and last but not least cooking and a good meal together with friends!





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Sue Kearley

Sue Kearley is from the West Country in England. She obtained her nursing degree from Liverpool University. As a student nurse she shared a house with a good looking student teacher named Paul. Sue qualified as a Specialist Practitioner in District Nursing and later a Nurse Prescriber. She has spent the last 10 years in nurse education in community and acute NHS healthcare settings and completed her MSc in Practice Education in 2009. Sue and Paul have two gorgeous daughters Ella (5) and Lara (3) who attend the kindergarten and are embracing learning a new language. The fifth member of Team Kearley is their faithful hound Raz (11) who originally came from Battersea dogs home.

Vivienne Hambleton

Vivienne Hambleton is British-born but home is Cape Town, South Africa. She studied Business Administration in Abingdon, Oxfordshire and her previous employers include Cambridge International Examinations, International School of South Africa, Cambridge University Press and GEMS Education. Vivienne has one daughter, Rebecca, who is at Loughborough University. Her personal interests include sailing and was the crew boss on a 34' racing ketch in Cape Town, hobie-cat racing and mountain biking. Her new goals are skiing, climbing, speaking German and finding a Hugh Grant look-alike.



Elli Hirschegger

Elli is a real Austrian Girl and loves everything about her home, the lakes, the mountains and most of all, the snow in the winter. She did her "Matura" in Languages and Economy in Ried/Wolfgangsee and worked in the Internal Sales department of Salzburg's biggest dairy company. Hobbies are reading, hiking, skiing, snowboarding and annoying her boyfriend with singing when they are driving. She also has a diploma in health and well-being..



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Natascha Lohse

Natascha Lohse is Austrian and did her diploma for Tourism Management in 1998 and was afterwards for 8 years abroad (Switzerland, U.K., Ireland, U.S.A. and Australia) to get experience in several management positions all around the hotel business. Natascha loves her work and it has even become her hobby next to her family.

Renate Riedl

Renate Riedl is a real Austrian girl - born, living and working in Austria for her whole life except for 14 months in Florida, USA. She started her working experience with a trading apprenticeship, but later she changed to an accounting department and from there she went to the hotel business for almost 18 years at different places in Austria. Renate loves spending time with her family and friends, reading, hiking and swimming and also travelling (favourite country is Italy /Tuscany).



Anita Schleifer

Anita Schleifer is originally from the Netherlands. After High School and Secretarial School she has worked and lived in England, USA, Switzerland, France, Spain, Germany and now Austria - where she intends to stay! Hobbies include reading, music and her animals. Sports include golf, skiing, ice skating, ballet, horseback riding and tennis.