

## **Freddie**

Firstly, I would like to thank everyone that was involved in making this trip so special for me, from BASET and my school, to the family I stayed with in Melbourne and the boarders in Darwin. Every person I met on this journey played a huge role and I can't thank them enough. Heading into the trip I was nervous and worried about spending a month away from my friends and family, and that I wasn't going to enjoy it. However, it turned out that a month wasn't long enough. This opportunity has allowed me to explore the other side of the world and build connections with new people, it has helped me make hard decisions about my future and what's next for me in this journey.

**Darwin** – Darwin was everything I Imagined, from the beautiful sunset beaches to the waterfalls and the hidden swimming holes. The connections I made were really something special, I loved learning about new cultures that I'd never heard of before. Talking to the indigenous students and learning their way of life was so interesting I was also jealous in some sort of way. Their history and beliefs were all so new to me and it is something I will never forget.

Darwin allowed me to study new subjects that I have never studied before, I was there long enough to build strong relationships with my teachers and actually want to learn even though I did not take these subjects back home. All the staff where so helpful and friendly it felt like I had been a student there for years.

Boarding was an experience I will never forget, it felt as if we were all a family. From playing basketball after school with everyone to playing video games at night in our friend's rooms. The house parents felt like your older siblings but also made sure everyone was safe and having fun. I loved waking up at 6am every Friday to take part in Friday footy, and it was amazing learning a new sport that I enjoyed so much. All of the activities we took part in with the boarders at the weekend were out of this world; beach walks, water parks, Mindal markets, and visiting swimming holes. I enjoyed these so much as it allowed me to see the parts of Australia I dreamed about.

**Melbourne** – Heading to Melbourne I was extremely worried due to how much I loved Darwin. I was concerned that it wouldn't come close to matching the good time I had in Darwin, but I was wrong, Melbourne was so different to Darwin but I enjoyed it just as much. I met so many friends and had so much fun in the short amount of time I was there. A lot of this is due to the family I stayed with; they made sure I was never sitting around doing nothing which allowed me to do so much in a short amount of time, from exploring the wonders of the city to hiking up mountains for amazing views.

Overall this experience was a once in a life time opportunity and I'm so grateful I was able to take part. I'm so excited to speak about it in assembly and share my stories and hopefully convince more people than ever to apply for this opportunity. Personally, I don't think anything should be changed unless you want to make the trip any longer, but it was perfect and was even better than imagined and I cannot wait to visit Australia again in the near future.