MORE than 90 fresh students and staff from two of Sydney’s leading schools were amongst those starting at The Armidale School this week.

The newcomers were warmly welcomed and introduced to the school by Headmaster Mr Murray Guest at the first school assembly for the year.

David Drain comes to TAS from St Joseph’s College Hunters Hill, and prior to that, worked in finance in Australia and the UK and in sports marketing, including with the Queensland Reds rugby union. He will be a senior teacher at TAS and a boarding housemaster.

Karl Sebire is the new Senior Visual Arts teacher, having spent many years teaching art at Australia’s oldest school, The King’s School; overseas, and working as a graphic artist.

“The size of the school means TAS provides professional opportunities in academic, boarding and co-curricular life that few schools can match,” Mr Sebire said.

Returning to TAS after several years in Rockhampton is Andrew Junge who will be a senior teacher and Middle School boarding housemaster.

New students include Hayden Shepherd, a Year 11 boarder from Singleton.

“I’m really looking forward to new opportunities here, including in rugby and getting a better academic education,” said Hayden, who has visited TAS previously as a member of the Australian Rugby Union’s Junior Gold Cup development squad.

His mother, Nichole, said goodbye with mixed emotions.

“It’s about finishing off his education well, and helping him develop independence,” she said. “Plenty of schools have nice brochures but through the TAS friends he has made with rugby we know TAS has genuine warmth and substance.”

Headmaster Murray Guest said the school’s enrolments remained strong, with the school again accommodating 200 boarders and Year 7 boarder numbers particularly healthy.

“I am very conscious that the pressure of drought, amongst other economic factors, has impacted heavily on many of our boarding families. Their commitment to present their sons with their TAS education is both heartening and a reminder to all of us here of the importance of assisting every TAS student to make the most of their opportunities here.”

ENDS

Photo: New TAS staff member David Drain, formerly from Sydney, welcomes new boarder Hayden Shepherd from Singleton, as he says goodbye to his parents Nichole and Kerry and sister Eliza.