As Term 3 draws to a close, this is a good time to reflect on what we have achieved so far this year, as well as look forward to what we are yet to achieve. Every student is given every opportunity to achieve her personal best here at GRC Penshurst Girls Campus. From our dedicated teaching staff, to all our support staff, including counsellors, librarians, the Careers Advisor and ESL (EAL/D) and Learning and Support teachers, every teacher is here to ensure each girl achieves her potential. With the end of the school year upon us next term, now is the time for each girl to take stock of her learning journey so far, and to honestly ask herself ‘am I achieving my best?’ If the answer is no, then I urge each girl to take advantage of the expertise here at school, to reach out to their teachers and put in place a plan to maximise their achievement. A culture of high expectations must start with the individual student. That, combined with our school’s faith in every student, will ensure that each girl shines as bright as she can.

A highlight of this term has been the celebration of diversity. We celebrated Multicultural Day with a vibrant and dynamic assembly highlighting the respect of culture and diversity which is at the core of our school’s values. The confidence and pride our students displayed when sharing their cultural heritage through song and dance was inspiring. From our moving Chinese singers, to our Cook Islander dancers, our Macedonian dancers (joined by their peers from GRC Hurstville Boys Campus), our Greek and Lebanese dancers, our Brazilian performers, to the beauty and rarity of the virtuoso performance of the Chinese violin accompanied by acoustic guitar, it truly was an inspirational way to end the term, and to remind us of the diverse and tolerant community we have here at GRC Penshurst Girls Campus.

Our Multicultural Day Assembly was capped off by a wonderful food festival. There was more food than could possibly be eaten, and I would like to thank the many parents who cooked for this event, sharing their delicious cuisines and passing on their cultural heritage to not only their daughters, but to all of us.

Last week Ms McGarrity, our Head Teacher Welfare, highlighted the significance of R U OK? day. The front of the school was festooned with yellow balloons and the giant silver balloons in the shape of the R U OK letters flew high beside the school’s entrance. The staff showed their support of this significant wellbeing initiative through their yellow attire. Our school is proud of the extensive and successful wellbeing programs we have in place, and this day highlighted our commitment to issues of mental health and wellbeing. This was supported by the YAP (Year Adviser Programming) days where each year group enjoyed a day of specialist and tailored activities aimed at improving student wellbeing and highlighting the many challenging issues which our girls need the skills, knowledge and resilience to manage as they mature into young women.

Last week we held our 2015-2017 School Planning Parent and Community Forum. School staff were joined by student leaders, parent representatives, local Primary School Principals, as well as a representative from the Penshurst Girls Union, to discuss our hopes and dreams for the future of our school. Next term we will promote other opportunities to ‘have your say’ and contribute to the discussion through our school website.

Last Saturday our SRC President (School Captain), Sarasvathy W., and I were invited by The Honourable Tony Abbott MP, and Prime Minister of Australia, to Morning Tea at Kirribilli House. Whilst the weather was not exactly conducive to the visit, nonetheless the opportunity to spend time at the historic Kirribilli House, on its prime Sydney Harbour vantage point, was an unrivalled experience. Sarasvathy had the opportunity to not only converse with the Prime Minister and his wife, but also with a variety of School Captains from other schools. Naturally, the topic of the day was leadership. Sarasvathy...
will write an account of her experience in our first newsletter for Term 4. The picture is of all the Georges River College School Captains, in front of the fireplace in the main sitting room at Kirribilli House.

Next term we welcome back Mrs Noonan after a period of extended leave. Mrs Noonan will be re-joining the Learning Support Team to ensure the individual learning needs of all our students continue to be met. She will continue to work with Mrs Prestoe, and will also be joined by Ms Fountas, who will be joining the Learning Support Team in addition to her work as a teacher in the HSIE faculty. Next term we will also welcome Ms Castillo, who will also be joining the Learning Support team on a part time basis.

With holidays upon us, I encourage all students to ensure they revise work already studied during the term, to make sure all assignments are complete and to complete all work to the best of their ability, especially as we head into our assessment and reporting period at the start of Term 4.

I wish the entire school community a restful and recuperative break.

Ms Noeline Ross
Principal

Model Students

Following from the construction of a pyjama bag, Year 7 Technology 3 successfully completed their boxer shorts. Some students added lace, ribbon, a pocket or embroidery to their shorts. The student's next goal is to design and make a clock in the wood unit.

Mrs Linda Harrison
Technology and Applied Studies Faculty

From The English Faculty

ICAS English Reading and Writing Competitions

Earlier this year, students from Years 7 to 10 participated in the ICAS (International Competitions and Assessments for Schools) English Competitions for Reading and Writing. There were over 130 combined entries and the results we have just received are outstanding. Students were awarded with 7 Distinctions in Writing, 6 Distinctions in Reading, 45 Credits, 29 Merits and 48 participation certificates.

Distinction certificates were awarded to the following girls:

Writing - Year 10: Julia S., Year 8: Samraggi P., Year 7: Alycia G., Ella-Rose L., Hayley S., Caitlin S. and Chanel S.
Reading - Year 10: Darcy B., Year 8: Samraggi P., Year 9: Nataszia P., Claire O. and Chloe H., Year 7: Ella-Rose L.

Congratulations and well done girls!

International Literacy Day

Literacy is a fundamental human right and the foundation for lifelong learning. It is essential to social and human development in its ability to transform lives. It is an instrument of empowerment.

On Monday 8 September 2014, GRC Penshurst Girls Campus participated in International Literacy Day along with many other schools in Australia and around the world. The aim of
International Literacy Day was to provide students with a wonderful opportunity to recognize the significance of Literacy and the impact it has on our daily lives. The day was extremely successful and it was a great opportunity to raise funds to support the World Literacy Foundation and its work in poorer countries where children do not have access to books and educational resources. Students participated in a range of fun and engaging literacy activities in their classrooms to promote Literacy and enhance their appreciation of it. Here is a special 'thank you' from Andrew Kay from the World Literacy Foundation:

Dear Georges River College Penshurst Girls Campus

I just wanted to take a moment to say thank you to all the people - children, teachers, parents, community volunteers who got involved in International Literacy Day this year. As a united voice we certainly made an impact and raised awareness of the needs of those who can’t read and write.

Together, we reached 650 million people across 112 countries with community awareness on the importance of literacy in our lives each day. Thank you for your support!

Already we are hearing of some great activities that were held on the day, but most importantly we got kids reading. They also had a lot of fun learning why reading is so important to their lives and the lives of children in less developed countries.

You may know children who are resistant to reading - they may see it more as a job to do, a homework task. Through events such as International Literacy Day we hope to not only raise awareness of the high rates of illiteracy in the world, but also bring some fun into the reading experience. Helping children to identify, themes, authors, illustrators and literacy activities that they enjoy can give them the encouragement they need to read more often and develop a love for and habit of reading.

Beyond International Literacy Day there is also the opportunity for your school to help address the high rates of illiteracy in the world and be a voice throughout the year. Simply go to www.worldliteracyfoundation.org to see how else you can get involved.

Thanks again for your support.

A special thanks to students and their parents for supplying cupcakes and other items for sale in order to raise the much needed funds.

Premier’s Debating Challenge

During Terms 2 and 3, GRC Penshurst Girls Campus Years 7 and 8 Debating Teams participated in the Premier’s Debating Challenge. In Round 1, Years 7 and 8 GRC Penshurst Girls Campus debated against GRC Peakhurst Campus. Both teams debated very well and the award went to GRC Penshurst Girls Campus. In Round 2, our school hosted the opposition team GRC Peakhurst Campus. Our students debated very well and their arguments were more logical and convincing. With great pride, the debate was again awarded to GRC Penshurst Girls Campus. Round 3 took place at our school between Year 7 and 8 students and the debate was awarded to Year 7. Having now won all the three rounds, the Year 7 team have been declared Zone Champions for 2014. I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the hard work of Mr Morgan and Miss Reid who coached both Years 7 and 8 teams.

Year 7 Team: Ella-Rose L., Abigail G., Gita K., Aisha N. and Caitlin S.
Year 8 Team: Melanie N., Yasmin K., Alexandra B., Teresa L. and Pei Ming J.

Congratulations girls for your outstanding achievements and for being great representatives of Georges River College Penshurst Girls Campus.

Mrs Elham Gabra
Relieving Head Teacher English

PDHPE News

CHS Athletics Carnival

On Thursday 4 and Friday 5 September, Chantal Y. and Amy H. of Year 8 represented the Sydney East Region at the NSW Combined High Schools Athletics Carnival.

Upcoming Dates

Term Dates 2014

Term 4: 07/10 - 17/12

Year 9 Elective Assessment Period
20-24/10

Year 9 Yearly Examination Period
27-31/10

Year 10 Elective Assessment Period
27-31/10

Year 10 Yearly College Examinations
31/10

Year 10 Oatley Orientation
01-02/12

Year 7, 2015 Orientation Day
03/12

Year 9 Resource Return Day
05/12

Year 10 Graduation
12/12

Year 10 Resource Return Day
10/12

Sports Assembly
10/12
Chantal made it through to the finals in the 13 years 80m hurdles. Amy competed in the 14 years 1,500m walk and finished in third position winning a bronze medal.

We are extremely proud of both girls. Making it through to state level is a fantastic achievement.

Well done Chantal and Amy!

Ms Caroline Joy
PDHPE Co-ordinator

Netball

Congratulations to Casey D. who has been selected in the U16 years Indoor Netball NSW State team, which will be competing at the 2014 Junior Indoor Netball Championships to be held in Perth from 29/11/14 - 7/12/14. We wish Casey the best of luck at these Championships.

Mr Mark Laverance
PDHPE Faculty

Languages Matters

Buon Viaggio!

Leaving on September 13, Catherine T., Lauren Z., Rachel B. and Jessica P. from Year 10 will be embarking on a fabulous adventure to Italy for four weeks. They will be travelling with students and teachers from Beverly Hills Girls High School and other local high schools. They will experience life in the Tuscan town of Montepulciano and visit other cities such as Rome, Venice and Florence. What an amazing opportunity. We wish them safe travels and look forward to seeing photos and hearing all about it when they return.

Mrs Janelle Byrne, Ms Stefanie Verchiani, Ms Linda Meogrossi and Ms Vicky Kuang Languages Faculty

CAPA Faculty Report

Koori Arts Expressions 2014

Since attending an art excursion to the Art Gallery of New South Wales, selected Year 8 students have been working towards the development of our school’s entry in the Koori Arts Expressions 2014 exhibition at the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney.

The students have at present completed one full day art workshop on 4 September at school under the direction of Mr Garry Belinfante and Ms Lauren Grumitt, and it is anticipated that they will complete their work this week on Friday 19 September. We wish the girls well.

Mr Garry Belinfante
Creative and Performing Arts Head Teacher

Back to School Assembly

Ms Julie Boxhall is an ex-student who spoke at one of our assemblies this term. Julie’s story is one which highlights a love of lifelong learning, as well as a commitment to making the lives of others better. Here is an edited extract of her speech:

Good morning everyone.

I was a student at Penshurst Girls High School from 1973 to 1978 and it has been 36 years since I have stood on this stage and spoken to an assembly.

My name is actually on these Honour Boards. I was Vice Captain in 1978 and I also won the Sylvia Shorter Prize.

When I was 15 years old my dad asked what I wanted to do. He had wanted me to open my own business, like him,
and my mum wanted me to be a secretary like her. But I wanted to be a teacher. I needed to find out whether I liked kids and whether they liked me. I found volunteer work in a children’s home and I went every Sunday. I soon realized that not all children were loved like me. Now I wanted to save the world.

I continued to do volunteer work until the beginning of Year 12. I was then offered paid employment at Montrose, which was a child protection centre. This was pretty heavy going for a 17 year old to witness.

At the end of Year 12 I went to Milperra College (now UWS). I studied for an Associate Diploma in Social Welfare and I continued working at Montrose. I did my last work placement at Women and Girls Emergency. I was then offered a job there. I worked with people from the ages of 12 to 84 and I mainly worked in Kings Cross and the inner city.

I then worked in a women’s refuge, working with both women and children. I then began a career in family day care, where children are minded in registered carers’ homes. In this role, I had to visit educators. I found I didn’t have enough knowledge, so I went to TAFE and undertook a four year part time course for a Certificate in Child Studies. I then became the manager of Hurstville Family Day Care. With this new level of responsibility I found I still wanted to learn more. I then began a degree in Social Science - Majored in Sociology (study of societies) and minoring in Psychology.

I then met my husband and we began a family. When my eldest child was one year old I went back to work as a TAFE teacher.

Life had come full circle.

I began, as a young girl here at Penshurst Girls, wanting to be a teacher. I became one. I began a Master’s Degree in Early Childhood. When I was at school I thought only smart people went to university but I soon realized that it is all about working hard.

The payoff is if you enjoy something then you will work hard at it. So choose subjects that you enjoy and you are passionate about. Do the same with your career or job choice.

My other advice is to try and do some volunteer work in the field you would like to work in. I am presently doing some volunteer work in a local pre-school for my own professional development. Do not let fear stop you. Put yourselves out there.

I have just recently read where everyone, including movie stars, famous singers, elite athletes etc., all experience fear at one time or another, especially if they are out of their comfort zone. If fear had stopped these people from auditioning or competing they would not be successful in their chosen field. If I had let fear stop me from continuing to learn and study I would not be in a career that I love.

Remember that most of us are just trying to get through life the best way we can. Often we are unaware of what is really happening in other people’s lives and how this affects them. They say the greatest challenge in life is discovering who you are. The second is then being happy with what you find. Try and develop your own sense of what is important to you and find friends who are respectful and share your values and hopes for the future.

If you can take one thing away from my talk today please may it be to not ever let fear hold you back, remember to break free and never give up.

Just feel the fear and do it anyway.

Ms Noeline Ross
Principal

Welfare Report

R U OK? Day

On Thursday 11 September, students arrived at school to the sight of four huge helium balloons spelling ‘R U OK’ in acknowledgement of the annual ‘R U OK?’ day which is a not-for-profit organisation founded by Gavin Larkin in 2009, whose vision is a world where we’re all connected and are protected from suicide. Accordingly, our mission is to encourage and equip everyone to regularly and meaningfully ask “Are you okay?”

We know that suicide prevention is an enormously complex and sensitive challenge the world over. But we also know that some of the world’s smartest people have been working tirelessly and developed credible theories that suggest there’s power in that simplest of questions - “Are you okay?”.

Many staff wore yellow to recognise the occasion and all day we could hear the question being asked amongst our school community. Let’s hope for an even bigger celebration of this day in 2015.

Cyberbullying

Say NO to cyberbullying - tips for parents

1. Talk to your child about cyberbullying before it happens. Work out strategies to address cyberbullying
that both of you are comfortable with so your child
knows what to expect if they do report their concerns
to you.
2. Establish one or two other trusted adults your child is
comfortable in approaching about their concerns.
3. Be aware of what your child is doing online and explore
it with them.
4. Keep the lines of communication open so your child will
be comfortable about talking to you if something is
worrying them. Help your child to develop the skills
they need to interact safely and respectfully online. Guide
their online activities and help them learn to
communicate appropriately with friends and family.
5. Try to locate the computer in a shared or visible place
in the home.
6. Discuss the kinds of sites that are okay to explore and
those that are not and have clear rules about online
activities.
7. Help your child to block anyone who sends offensive
content. Most social networking services allow users to
block and report someone who is behaving badly.

What to do if you think your child is being cyberbullied:
1. Discuss any changes in mood or behaviour with them. If
you are concerned, help your child to stay connected to
friends and family they trust.
2. Notify the police immediately if you have serious
concerns for your child’s safety.
3. Work with your child to save some evidence of
cyberbullying behaviour – it may need to be followed
up by the child’s school, internet service provider
(ISP), mobile phone carrier or the police.
4. If you need to involve your child’s school, ask them
to thoroughly explain their processes so that you can
work toward achieving a positive outcome. (NSW
public schools have anti-bullying policies which you
can ask to see, or can often find on their websites.)
5. Cyberbullying won’t stop if it’s ignored – you can help
by listening to your child and working with them to
take control of the situation.

How much screen time?
Seven tips from the experts:
1. You’re the boss: some parents are hesitant to lay
down the digital law and limit screen time, but the
above research shows that it is in your child’s
interest to set limits.
2. The two hour screen time grab: tell your child they
have two hours per day and how they use that time is
up to them so long as they don’t go over the time
limit (or set a lesser time limit if you prefer). This is
similar to financial budgeting – you have $20, spend it
as you see fit.
3. Have a plan: ask your child how they are going to
spend their time so they get into the habit of
planning their screen time, as opposed to just letting
it roll on.
4. Watch the clock: have your child get in the habit of
writing down when they started, and when they ended.
Logging time helps everyone to see that the rules are
being followed.
5. Food and drink free zone: eliminate food and drink in
front of the screen. Family time in front of a movie
together can involve a bowl of popcorn or other treats,
but eliminate this element during solo screen time.
6. Physical time: make sure your child is getting regular
physical activity, which can include an evening walk with
the dog or scheduled sporting commitments. And even if
your child opts to take their screen time in one-two
hour hit, get them into the habit of getting up at the
one hour mark and taking a 10-minute break.
7. Hobbies and other pursuits: busy kids are less likely to
have screen time issues and, in general, report being more
fulfilled and interested in the world around them.

Ms Oonagh McGarrity
Head Teacher Welfare

Awards

Congratulations to the following students who have
received awards:

Bronze Award
Year 8: Abbie F., Sophie G., Laura L., Sarah M., Yuhang
Emily W., Joanna X., Vicky X. and Chantal Y.

St George and Sutherland Shire Table Tennis
Website: SBTT.org.au

October & November 2014
Table Tennis Training at HALC
Hurstville Aquatic Leisure Centre
Cnr. Kings Georges Rd & Forest Rd, Hurstville NSW 2220, Australia

St George Sutherland Shire Table Tennis Association is offering an 8-week table tennis
training program for players of all levels from beginners to competition players.

Where: Friday evenings
Date: 10th October – 30th November
Time: 7:30pm – 9:30pm
Cost: $55 per evening / $180 for full 8-week program
Book by: 30th September, 2014

Group Training Program Features:
• Training provided by one Australian’s most successful coaches Peter Masen
• Training program is open to all ages and standards
• Well structured training according to your ability
• Fun and friendly atmosphere
• Games played during training seasons
• Contact Peter Masen on 0470 366 830 for any questions about the program

Register Now!
Email info@halc.com.au

2014 Australian Junior Table Tennis
Championships 28/01/14 – 4/01/14
Hurstville Aquatic Leisure Centre, Cnr Kings Georges Rd & Forest Rd Hurstville
Come see the best Under 13 Table Tennis Players in Australian compete for the Australian Title in U13 Boys and Girls,
U15 Boys and Girls, and U13 Boys and Girls Singles, Doubles, Mixed Doubles.
On Daily from 9.9/14am until approx 8:30pm
Entry Ticket (bring this ticket for FREE entry for 2 Persons)
Hello all

Well Term 3 is now over, the school year is flying past and will be over before we know it.

Thank you to Ms Ross, staff, parents and students who were recently part of the Forum that was held regarding the School Plan for 2015-2017, it was great to be able to provide input into the future of our school.

Our next P&C meeting will be held on Tuesday 21 October, at 7.00pm in the Staff Common Room.

Our Recycled Uniform Shop will be open on the following dates:- Friday 31 October and Friday 28 November 2014.

If anyone would like to donate their old school uniforms it would be greatly appreciated, so we can keep our uniform shop stocked.

If you would like to be added to the P&C’s mailing list to be kept up to date with the P&C minutes, please contact me.

Mrs Helen James - P&C President
Mobile: 0410 296 092
Email: helenjames6@optusnet.com.au