



# Newsletter

## Principal's Message

Term 1 Week 3  
Friday 12th February, 2016

Welcome to the start of another school year! It has been wonderful to see both staff and students ready for another year of teaching and learning. The students look bright, happy and proud in their beautiful aqua blue uniforms. Last week we welcomed our Kindergarten students who started 'big school' so confidently and so easily. They have adapted to our school rules and routines so quickly! I extend a special welcome to families who are new to our school. It has been great chatting to you all and I hope that you will enjoy the quality teaching programs and the strong community feel that our school offers.

I am pleased to announce that we formed 13 classes this week. While this process took longer than anticipated, we are glad that restructuring of classes was not required. Our 13 class arrangements will remain in place for the rest of the year regardless of any students who may leave as the year progresses. Thank you for your patience and understanding while this took place.

Over the holidays we had a number of improvements throughout the school:

- Painting of 6F and 1K classrooms
- New blinds installed in most classrooms
- Resurfacing and painting of bitumen area outside pool
- Tree cutting – 4 trees removed according to annual tree report
- New furniture in 6F

This has not only modernised and updated our physical learning environment but has ensured the safety of our school community too. We also hope that you like our new look communications this year.

This newsletter includes a lot of information about school routines and procedures, so please take the time to read.

I hope to catch up with more of you over coming weeks, however please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries or concerns.

Have a great week!

Tanya Sarafoski



### Week 4

**Tues 16 Feb** Meet the Teacher Night

**Fri 19 Feb** PSSA Rnd 1

### Week 5

**Thurs 25 Feb** District Swimming

**Fri 26 Feb** PSSA Rnd 2

### Week 6

**Thurs 3 Mar** Mufti Day & Cake Stall

**Fri 4 Mar** PSSA Rnd 3

### Week 7

**Mon 7 Mar** Hazelhurst St 2

P&C Meeting

**Thurs 10 Mar** Hazelhurst St 2

**Fri 11 Mar** PSSA Rnd 4

### Week 8

**Mon 14 Mar** Intensive Swim Prog

Hazelhurst St 3

**Wed 16 Mar** Hazelhurst St 3

**Fri 18 Mar** PSSA Rnd 5

# 2016 Staff Structure

## Class Teachers:

KS—Mrs Solo

KP—Mrs Pearce

1K—Mrs Kostoglou

1E—Mrs Klicek

1/2P—Mrs Power

2S—Mr Sanders (Assistant Principal for K-2)

3C—Miss Cole (Relieving Assistant Principal for Stage Two)

3/4L—Mrs Kingsnorth (replacing Mrs Liston)

4H—Mrs Harris

4/5B—Mr Brown

5L—Mrs Lymberis

5/6B—Mr Briggs

6F—Mrs Floratos (Assistant Principal for Stage Three)

## Support Teachers:

Mrs Nichols—RFF teacher

Mrs Wells—Reading Recovery & RFF teacher

Ms Dawson—Librarian (Mon-Thurs)

Mrs Brown—EALD teacher

Mrs Stubis—Learning and Support Teacher

Mr Francis—School Counsellor (Tues & Fri)

## Other Support Staff:

Student Learning Support Officers (SLSO): Mrs Woodhams & Mrs Nikro

Admin staff— Mrs Elliott (Admin Manager), Miss Danielle, Mrs Hart (Tues), Mrs Gentle (Fri)



## Support roles explained

**Relief from Face to Face Teaching (RFF):** Every full time teacher employed by NSW Department of Education is entitled to two hours per week relief from face-to-face teaching duties. This time is used by the teachers for parent interviews, marking student work, preparation of lessons, organising materials and meeting with other teachers. Schools have the flexibility to organise RFF to suit the needs of the students and the expertise of the teachers. During 2016 students will participate in library lessons and PDHPE during RFF times.

**English as an Additional Language/Dialect Teacher (EALD):** For students whose first or main language is not English, we offer programs in developing speaking, listening, writing and reading skills in English. These lessons are held during normal school hours and may be in the child's main classroom; in a team teaching mode or the students may be withdrawn for a period of time on a regular basis.

**Reading Recovery Teacher:** Our reading recovery teacher is specially trained to provide an early intervention reading program in the school for students who are experiencing difficulties with reading in Year 1. The program offers intensive individual daily half hour lessons, aiming to bring the reading level of these students up to at least average classroom levels.

**School Counsellor:** The school counsellor is specially trained in psychology and assists students who have learning, social or behaviour issues. The school counsellor is at our school approximately 3 days a fortnight. Parents who have concerns about their children should make an appointment to see the counsellor through the class teacher.

**Learning Support Team:** Our school has a very active and effective Learning Support Team. The LST meets regularly to discuss the specific learning needs of referred students. The Learning and Support Teacher and the SLSOs support students who may have learning difficulties, students with disabilities, students with behavioural problems or gifted and talented students.

**If you have any concerns about your child's learning, wellbeing or behaviour, you should always talk to your**



# 21st Century Learning Space

6F has had a major transformation! We have completely converted the learning environment into a '21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Space' which encourages more collaboration, communication and problem solving. The company who supplied us the furniture have found the following results from their classroom investigations:

*When students are comfortable they find it easier to concentrate and learn. Of principals and teachers surveyed in 75 schools by AC Nielson:*

- 80% said students sit still for longer without fidgeting in Bodyfurn chairs and desks
- 78% said it was easier moving around the classroom
- 75% said students were more focused with better concentration

*Video analysis by University of Waikato showed:*

- Average time off task per student in year seven rooms reduced by 83%
- Time spent rocking on chairs is reduced to zero
- Time taken to settle into a task is halved
- Students felt safer on Bodyfurn chairs

Not only does it look great, it actually has benefits to student learning. This classroom will be available for all classes to use throughout each week:



# Composite Classes

This year, we have again formed two mixed-aged, or composite, classes. Composite classes are a long-standing and widely used method of grouping children which can successfully cater for the learning and social needs of students. Many schools form composite classes as a preferred option, because of the benefits they can bring. We have had composite classes at this school for many years, and our teachers are very experienced and comfortable with catering for the students in these classes.

You may not be aware that, since the mid '90s, the Department of Education syllabus documents have been written in terms of stages, rather than grades or years. Each stage caters for students across two school years, with the awareness that not all children learn at the same rate. These syllabus documents, which drive class teaching and learning programs, ensure that teachers group children according to their needs. Even in a "straight" class, with children of approximately the same age (although this can vary by up to eighteen months), there will be big differences in students' ability, maturity and learning readiness. In effect, all classes are composite classes! Research indicates that in a typical, for example, Year 4 class, with children of approximately 10 years of age, the difference in reading age averages seven years. That is, some children will be reading at the level of a seven year old, while others will be reading at the level of a 14 year old. Obviously, to meet these children's needs, teachers have to group and provide appropriate work which challenges and extends children at their particular level.

The same is true in a composite class. Being mindful of the stages and outcomes which children need to achieve, teachers group according to children's needs and levels of ability. This is particularly important in English and Mathematics, where skills and understandings are more finely differentiated. No child should be held back, nor unduly pushed forward. Teachers assess the children's current level of understanding and performance, and move forward from there.

Please be assured that all students, including those placed in a composite class, will enjoy teaching and learning activities which are designed to meet their needs and abilities. In selecting students for the composite classes, teachers have identified children who would most benefit from the opportunity to work in a learning environment that provides academic challenge. Mrs Power (1/2P), Mrs Kingsnorth (3/4L), Mr Brown (4/5B) and Mr Briggs (5/6B) are highly experienced and talented teachers who will provide their students with a great year of learning and development.

Our teachers plan and work collaboratively, so that students in composite classes are involved in grade groups, events and activities. Our students will also mix socially and be actively encouraged to make friendships across their grade.

Please be reassured that, in whichever class your child has been placed, they are in excellent hands. Research evidence strongly indicates that it is the teacher, and support from home, which makes the difference in student achievement, not the name or composition of the class.

## Meet the Teacher Night

On Tuesday, 16 February, we will be holding our annual 'Meet the Teacher Night'. All parents are invited to attend this information night, where teachers will outline classroom procedures, areas of study and other details that will assist parents in gaining a better understanding of the needs of their child and ways to support their learning.

A separate note has been sent home about this.

**5-5.30pm— Early Stage One (Kindergarten)**

**5.30-6pm—Stage One (Years 1 & 2)**

**6-6.30pm—Stage Two (Years 3 & 4)**

**6.30-7pm—Stage Three (Years 5 & 6)**

# Changes to Friday Sport for Years 3-6

Last year, the schools in the Georges River PSSA region held a vote to change sport to a morning session. After a very close vote it was decided that PSSA sport would change to Friday mornings from 2016.

As a result of this, all Friday sport for years 3-6 will be held in the morning. Students who participate in PSSA sport will need to arrive at school by 9am, as per PSSA notes.

## From the Admin Office

### Invoices & Payments

At the end of last year we sent out a parent survey where the majority of respondents supported our term invoice system. Now that our classes are finalised, term invoices will be distributed over coming days. We hope to have these out sooner in terms 1-4. We are also looking at establishing online parent payments this semester.

Thank you to all students who purchased textbooks. If you have not purchased these yet, please see Anna or Danielle in the office as we do have sets available for late purchase.

As always, please see admin staff if you have difficulties making payments or would like to make a payment plan for school costs.

### Second Hand Uniforms

Preloved uniforms have been very popular. If you have any uniforms at home that are clean and in great condition, please bring them to the office if you would like to donate them to the school.

If you would like to purchase second hand uniforms, please see Danielle in the office. **The second hand uniform shop is open every Tuesday.**

### Lost property

Every day we have copious amounts of jackets, lunch boxes and hats in the playground. Many of these items are unlabelled and cannot be returned to their owner. Please label all of your child/children's belongings. At the moment we have 4 baskets of lost jackets outside the admin entry. If your child lost a jacket over the past 6-12 months, please check if it is in these baskets. Anything unclaimed after Tuesday will be donated to the second hand uniform shop.

## Newsletter and Notes

As this is our first newsletter for 2016, we have distributed a printed copy to all families. In the future, all newsletters will be sent home electronically through our 'Skoolbag' app. This is a great way for the school to reduce printing costs and become more environmentally friendly.

Instructions on how to download the FREE Skoolbag app are in this newsletter. Printed copies of the newsletter will be available from the office if needed.

Notes and event information are also available through the Skoolbag app or on our website.

## Attendance

Education for your child is important and regular attendance at school is essential for your child to achieve their educational best and increase their career and life options.

NSW public schools work in partnership with parents to encourage and support regular attendance of children and young people at school.

When your child attends school every day, learning becomes easier and your child will build and maintain friendships with other children.

On occasion, your child may need to be absent from school. Justified reasons for student absences may include:

- Being sick or having an infectious illness
- Having an unavoidable medical appointment
- Being required to attend a recognised religious holiday
- Exceptional or urgent family circumstances

School attendance also includes arriving to school on time.

Following an absence from school, you must ensure that within 7 days you provide the school with a verbal or written explanation.

If your child will be or has been absent from school, please notify the office by phone or send a notification via Skoolbag. We have attached absence slips to the newsletter which can also be used to explain your child's absence.



## Pennant Winners

Congratulations to the following students who received their pennants this fortnight! Keep up the great work!



**Riley Shaw**

**Taylor Conneely**

**Gabrielle Eaton**

**Kirston Downie**

**Alex Kim**

## Free Piano

The school has a piano in the library which requires some repairs . If anyone is interested in taking the piano, please see Miss Dawson in the library next week. If you wish to take it, you will be responsible for the removal of it.

## Parking & School Zones

Parking rangers have been at the school monitoring and warning drivers about driving and parking rules around the school. Please obey the 40km School Zone Speed Limits for the safety of our student and community. The rangers will be issuing fines to drivers who do not follow the rules. Please remember that the rules are there for the safety of our students.

## Car Park & Gates

A reminder to all parents to close gates when entering and exiting the school. We also ask you to avoid walking through the staff car park. Student safety and welfare is our number one concern.

## Skoolbag

### What is Skoolbag?

Skoolbag is school Mobile App that communicates directly with iPhone and Android devices. Skoolbag provides parents with the most convenient way to receive school notifications. No more lost paper in student school bags! School newsletters, school notices and alerts are communicated directly to the parent smartphone through the Skoolbag school Mobile App.

### For iPhone and iPad users:

1. Click the "App Store" icon on your Apple device.
2. Type your school name in the search (using suburb name will help).
3. If iPhone, you will see your school appear, click "Free" then "install".
4. If iPad, change the drop list to "iPhone Apps", your school will then be visible, click "Free" then "install".
5. When installed click "Open"
6. Select "OK" to receive push notifications, when asked.
7. Click the "More" button on the bottom right of the App, then "Setup".
8. Toggle on the Push Categories that are applicable for you.

### For Android users:

You must first have signed up with a Google Account before installing the app.

1. Click the "Play Store" button on your Android Device
2. Click the magnifying glass icon at the top and type in your school name,( using suburb name will help).
3. Click the school name when it appears in the search.
4. Click the "Install" button.
5. Click "Accept" for various permissions (please note, we do not modify any of your personal data on your device).
6. Click "Open" when installed.
7. Click the "More" button on the bottom right of the App, then "Setup".

# Swimming Carnival

Our annual Swimming Carnival was held in our pool yesterday. It was a great event with a program of hotly contested races. The finals were held after lunch, followed by the novelty events for everyone. The last event on the program was the school relay with a boy and girl from each grade representing the houses. A special mention must go to Miss Cole, Mr Brown, Mrs Power and Ms Nichols for organising such a wonderful event and to the parents GRC Year 12 students who assisted as time keepers, judges and lifesavers.







# GEORGES RIVER COLLEGE

## PEAKHURST CAMPUS

## OPEN NIGHT DETAILS



### PEAKHURST CAMPUS

Open Night – Tuesday 23 February

6.30pm - 8.30pm

- Information session
- Campus tours
- Meet the teachers, students and parents of GRC Peakhurst Campus
- Displays and performances

PRINCIPAL: Terry Vallis

Enquiries: 02 9153 9966



### PEAKHURST CAMPUS

Peakhurst Campus delivers diverse, dynamic and flexible learning in an inclusive, collaborative and harmonious school community. Students are empowered to become self-motivated learners, critical and creative thinkers, to be compassionate, act with integrity and pursue personal excellence.

## PEAKHURST CAMPUS

At Peakhurst Campus we challenge our students by offering a multitude of dynamic and flexible academic, sporting and Creative & Performing Arts programs. As a specialist Years 7 – 10 campus our successful age specific programs focus totally on the learning needs of students in these middle years of schooling.

Selective Enrichment Classes – Years 7 and 8 Selective Enrichment Classes cater to the particular learning needs of our Gifted and Talented students and are designed to develop their potential.

Our Special Education Faculty – cares for and teaches our students who have moderate intellectual and physical disabilities. These students are integral to and highly valued by our school.

Primary Links exciting shared programs and positive Initiatives involving our Partner Primary schools build strong relationships and allow for a smooth transition. These programs include Peakability – a highly successful dance enrichment program for students from local primary schools.



### Creative and Performing Arts

- Music talent development program
- Peaknote Gifted and talented vocal program
- Peakform – annual performing arts evening
- Peak View – annual creative arts competition
- 'Draw off' – public drawing competition
- Photography and digital media



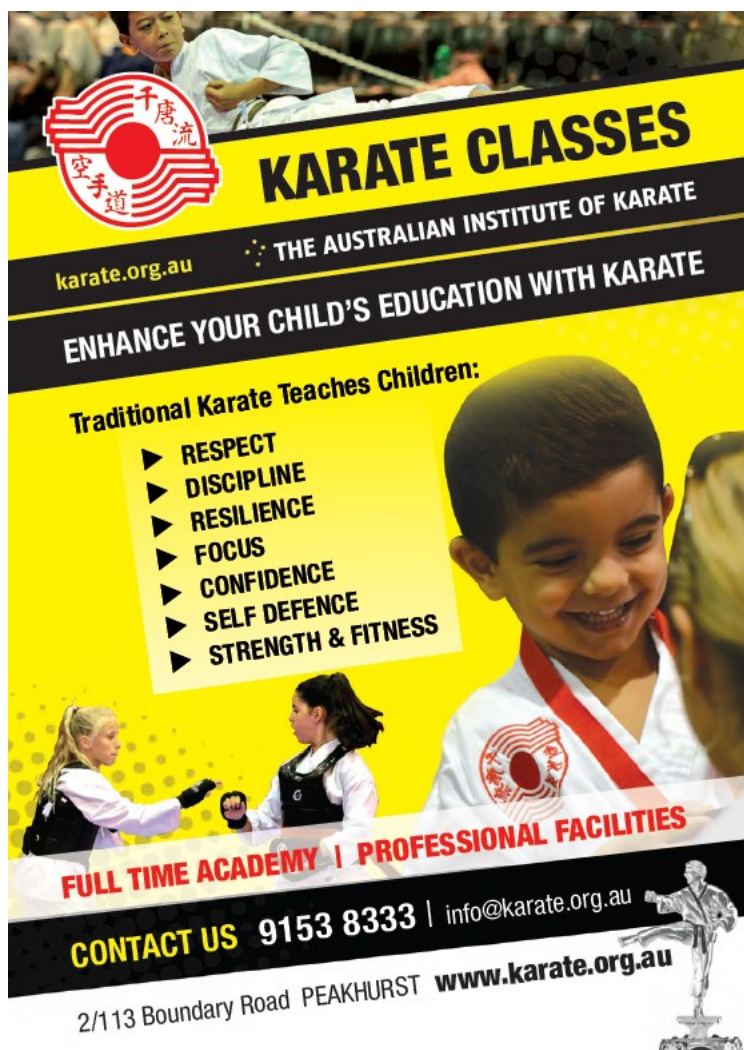
**Sport and fitness** – the Campus offers a wide range of sports and activities designed to provide students with opportunities to develop talents, skills and fitness.

### Duke of Edinburgh

This exciting and globally recognised program encourages young people to have a go at something new, different and challenging.







**KARATE CLASSES**

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- ▶ DISCIPLINE
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2/113 Boundary Road PEAKHURST **www.karate.org.au**



## East Hills Girls Technology High School

"EDUCATING GIRLS FOR A TECHNOLOGICAL FUTURE"

### ENROLMENTS FOR YEAR 7, 2017

*An invitation is extended to parents of Year 6 girls  
to meet staff, students and parents on -*

**Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> February 2016 at 1 pm**

*or*  
**Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> February 2016 at 6 pm**

*Please arrive at 6pm to view students' work and our excellent school facilities  
Information session will begin at 7 pm*

Our school, while honouring its heritage and traditions, is future-focused. It offers a technology rich learning environment which inspires girls and young women to aim high and achieve their potential. Our school has an excellent reputation for high academic achievement, innovation and student leadership. There is an extensive curriculum with a wide range of course choices and opportunities in the arts and sports. Last year our school celebrated 60 years of exceptional education.

We invite you to visit our school

Lucas Road, Panania  
Phone: 9773 9160 Fax: 9792 3853  
Email: easthillsg-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au



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**PEAKHURST WEST PUBLIC SCHOOL - Student Absence Slip**

Please return this slip to your child's teacher the day your child returns to school.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ (teacher's name),

My child \_\_\_\_\_ of Class \_\_\_\_\_ was absent from school on

\_\_\_\_\_ (date) because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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