

College Manager's Address

Hello Parents/Carers and Friends

As I sit here and reflect on 2020, I am wondering where it went? And perhaps some of you are thinking the same thoughts as I...

Throughout the year we quickly responded and adapted to a year that presented all of us with many challenges. I remember hearing a quote one evening to "never waste a pandemic" and I pondered for a while on what this might mean for me both personally, and as the College Manager. I believed that embracing the concept of mindfulness would help me focus on what I could affect rather than being consumed by the pandemic. Whilst I didn't master the art of meditation which is recommended for mindfulness I did embrace a sense of inner purpose and acceptance for where I was right now which is where I needed to be. Once all our students were safely home we put plans in place to work on our professional development and clean up or improve certain areas around the college in the shutdown period.

The team enjoyed the opportunity to complete online learning modules and attend the many webinars on offer and the manual work allowed us to admire all that we achieved together as a team. I was unable to visit my family and any planned trips for them to visit me were cancelled. This became the new norm, as was the case for many of us in Australia as our borders closed. I could have either felt sorry for myself in the holidays, or I could do things that I may not otherwise have done. Thus enjoying the extra time to focus on my tertiary studies, making patchwork quilts for my grandchildren along with plenty of knitting too. Mrs Edwards and I made masks for family and friends in the EAST as we watched the health crisis unfold, we enjoyed being able to play a small part in making a positive contribution to the pandemic as communities across Australia rallied to help others. I also enjoyed travelling to Coral Bay and experiencing a truly spectacular area of WA that was so removed from what was taking place so tragically in many countries and validating just how fortunate we all have been to live where we live.

The students adapted to the changes in their daily routine throughout the year to meet the new protocols in place. This showed me just how resilient children are and how important it is for them to have routines and guidelines to meet and to always be able to feel safe and supported in their 'home away from home' environment.

The students enjoyed many of the inhouse activities and local outings. We only managed one student trip this year, which was to Kalbarri in recent weeks, the students that did attend had a wonderful time. We are busy planning our activities for next year, and we look forward to sharing these with you throughout the year. I did want to let parents know that there are many occasions when students do not want to participate in planned local activities so if you ever hear 'we did nothing all weekend' perhaps give us a call. Our Orientation Event introduces

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new students to country boarding & our Presentation Day event celebrates the achievements of college life. Both events were enjoyed immensely by all those that attended.

Thank you to those that completed the 2nd Parent Survey that was sent out in Term 3 from the college. We received a fantastic response rate of 78% and an overall satisfaction rating of 89%. We did identify three areas of opportunity from your feedback so once again thank you for letting us know both what we do well, and what we can do better. There was one area that I am struggling to understand how we can do better and that is FOOD and I will talk about that a little later in this Newsletter.

The other two areas of opportunity were BEHAVIOURAL MANAGEMENT and LEARNING SUPPORT. These two areas also resonated with my concerns and observations. I have held discussions with the Supervisory Team our Principals and our Boarding Liaison Officers and from these discussions, we have developed a draft homework policy that will be finalised ready for implementation in 2021. What we discovered was that whilst we had expectations around homework time, our school expectations and school tutorial resources varied greatly. We trialled the Draft Homework Policy for a period in Term 4 with positive outcomes.

Behavioural Management involves us using Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) guidelines to reward positive behaviour and outline negative choices with consequences. Each term a student from both Dellahale and Frewer House is drawn out from our PBS Box. The winners are rewarded with a double pass to a movie of their choice at the local cinemas. Ten students were also recognised on Presentation Day for displaying positive behaviours throughout the year. Students in breach of the Boarding Agreement and Code of Conduct are managed in consultation with parents. Please be assured that all incidents are managed promptly and as per the Boarding Agreement Guidelines. Once again I invite any parent to contact myself directly if you have concerns.

We offer a variety of freshly prepared menu options by our Chefs and Kitchenhands every day. Produce is sourced locally and our menu is developed using the EAT LEARN and THRIVE guidelines. Our menu is also evaluated each year by the Western Australia School Canteens Association (WASCA) and this year we exceeded the benchmark in all three food categories of **GREEN @ 66%**, **AMBER @ 24%** & **RED @ 10%**. We regularly post pictures of 'What's on the Menu at GRC' and the feedback is always positive. Joyleen Letch our Weekday Chef would love to hear from any parent regarding menu options, as she is open to any suggestions, feedback or perhaps even your child's favourite recipe. Therefore, we welcome you to contact Joy at the college on 08 9923 5250 or send through an email to joyleen.letch@education.wa.edu.au introducing yourself and detailing your feedback. I share Joy's passion for healthy food that tastes great so your children/our students EAT, LEARN, and THRIVE every day. I also encourage you to talk to your children regarding the choices they make when they are shopping on town leave. We often have students not wanting any dinner, to later discover they have smuggled bags of fast food and or large quantities of packaged food items that are high in sugar back to their rooms.

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In Term 4 the students enjoyed a wonderful Xmas Party – with two students telling me “this is the best fun Ms Davis and my favourite event all year” – and it truly was. The students were so excited for the evening and ‘pass the parcel’ was a real hit yet again. All students met lights out that night without a problem!

I attended all the Year 12 and end of year School Presentation Ceremonies throughout Term 3 & 4 and I am always thrilled when our students are recognised at these ceremonies. Congratulations to all our students, we have very much enjoyed caring for you and we are very proud of all that you have achieved this year. It is our greatest wish that our students leave us living the values of Respect, Responsibility, and Care and returns with a commitment to live these values at the College or wherever their journey takes them through life.

Thank you to all the staff at the college who work tirelessly in their roles within the Ancillary and Supervisory teams. I would like to acknowledge Mrs Anne-Marie Wilson who supports me tirelessly to deliver on our commitment to parents in the care of their children and also Mrs Barbara Edwards for the enormous amount work she has done bringing us online with the transformation of our systems and processes as we migrated to Department’s standard operating environment.

Thank you also to our partner school Principals and staff, and our Local Input Networking and Communications (LINC) committee members, your knowledge and partnership are greatly appreciated. To our parents and carers, thank you for choosing us to care for your children, it is a privilege that we never take for granted.

Wishing you all the blessing of the festive season and a truly magical time with your children, family, and friends. We look forward to welcoming you back in 2021 along with the many new families that have enrolled their children at the Geraldton Residential College.

Sincere regards,
Ms Davis



Student Activities in Term 4



Term 4 has been another round of fun activities and college life.





Chef Joy is constantly improving our menu, and she works hard to help create balanced meals to help our students to 'Eat, Learn, Thrive'. This helped us receive our best score yet from the ELT team! Chef Joy and Chef Kellie prepare a range of delicious foods for everyone to enjoy.



We welcomed Kathleen (Traditional Owner) and Marion to the College this term to help us celebrate NAIDOC Week. The focus of the evening was to share Aboriginal knowledge, histories, and cultures so that we can acknowledge and appreciate the unique contribution of Aboriginal people. Kathleen reminded us in her Welcome to Country that all children need a stable foundation to spring from and that is education. Marion challenged us on 'what we know and what we think' about the history of Australia and the sufferings of Indigenous people, which created open dialogue. Kathleen also cooked a sensational Kangaroo Stew and fresh Damper which the students loved!

Sincere thanks to Kathleen and Marion, we were truly humbled by your presence and your stories.





'Northwest Pond'

The latest addition to our college grounds has been a focus in Frewer House this term. Some of our junior boys (mainly Hunter, Seth, Jayden and Jed) have been hard at work helping our gardener, Mick, create the new feature. The finished project is now home to a few fish thanks to a quick trip with Ms Davis one afternoon. A job well done by everyone!

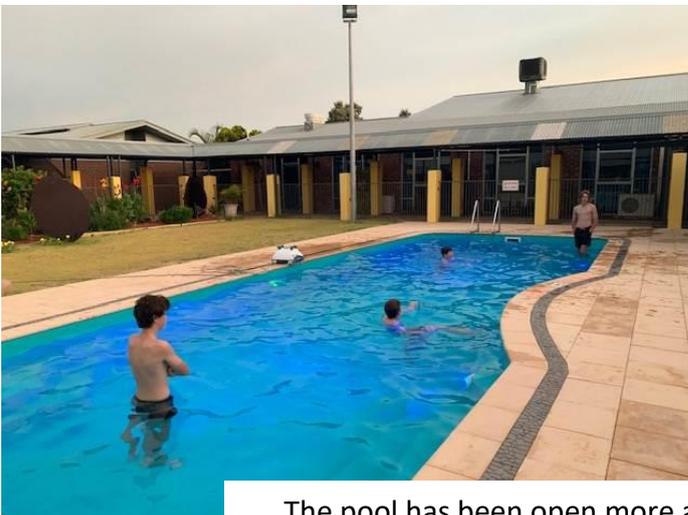


The latest addition for college games has been a great success. The Round Net has been often requested and played, with everyone getting (appropriately) competitive!





All students must return with a rashie to protect themselves from the soaring Geraldton sun while swimming!



The pool has been open more and more as the weather warms up, as well as our routine trips to the beach. At GRC we follow the SunSmart guidelines and ask everyone to *slip* on a rashie, *slop* on some 50+ Sunscreen and *slap* on a hat.



Every supervisor is qualified to open the pool – day or night! This comes in handy during Term 1, and the pool is open most days after school for a cool down!



Day Trip to Kalbarri



One of our activity highlights for the term was the day trip to Kalbarri led by Mr Pattenden and Mrs Peel. They loaded up a bus on a Saturday morning and set off with a group of students for a tour of Kalbarri's best known sights.

First was a stop past Hutt Lagoon to see the awesome Pink Lake.

Next was a quick walk down to Nature's Window, and of course up to the new Skywalk to admire the views.

The group stopped for a quick lunch in town and then it was off for a swim (and a jump off the jetty).

They were able to meet up with some of our students, who are lucky enough to have finished school for the year already but are always up for some good times!





It is always special seeing our boarding students recognised at our partner schools on presentation days and it reminds me of how proud I was at my children's school ceremonies. I always received such a thrill when their names were called out, just like this term when I heard our students being acknowledged for their academic, music/arts and sporting commitments and achievements. Congratulations to one and all! We at GRC are very proud of you!

- Ms Davis



Orientation Event



We welcomed all students transitioning to the college in 2021 for an Orientation sleepover. This is always a fun weekend, with plenty of student engagement, a family dinner, games around the college, tours of the town and a swim. Our newly appointed Head Students, along with some other future leaders, helped run some fun 'get to know you' games to put everyone at ease. Mr Sutherland led a tour of Geraldton, to introduce everyone to their new local hotspots. Everyone left full from the college lunch and excited for the year to come.



Thank you to all of our future families and current students for taking part in another wonderful Orientation!



Christmas at the College



This year we kept our Christmas Tree local with some Agave Blooms painted and potted up! They were decorated, along with the rest of the college just in time for our Christmas Dinner. Lots of student requests for food were delivered by Chef Joy and her team, along with a swim in the pool and some fun games. Our Christmas Dinner is something we always look forward to, and this year was no exception!



Welcome to new staff:



Kellie Rodden

(Weekend Chef)

Kellie has joined us this term as our new Weekend Chef. She has plenty of experience cooking for her own hungry teenagers, and has previously worked in the kitchen at the Geraldton Flexible Learning Centre.



Wendy Surawski

(Part-Time Supervisor)

Wendy has already shown herself to be an enthusiastic addition to our supervisory team. Wendy is passionate about creating a fun and safe environment for teenagers, and is also studying a Bachelor of Nursing in 2021.

Important Dates:

College Closes Term 4	5:00 pm Thursday 17 th December 2020
College Opens Term 1	9:00 am Sunday 31 st January 2021
GGs Return to School	Monday 1 st February 2021
NCC Return to School	Yr 7, 12 – Monday 1 st Feb, All students – Tuesday 2 nd Feb 2021
GSHS Return to School	Monday 1 st February 2021
CBSHS Return to School	Monday 1 st February 2021
GRC Orientation	6-7 th Feb (first weekend back)
2021 Leaders Dinner	14 th February
Boarders' Weekend	26 th Feb – 1 st Mar
College Closes Term 1	5:00 pm on Thursday 1 st April 2021

Things to Note for 2021:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Updated policies for 2021: Personal Electronic Device Policy & Study Time Policy (available on our website)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Please provide your children with a cup/mug for supper
<ul style="list-style-type: none">No medication is to be kept in student rooms
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Please provide lunch boxes and cooling bricks for lunches to be taken to school each day
<ul style="list-style-type: none">All students must wear a rashie while in the college pool and swimming at the beach