

STREET CORNER

CUA



GSC

Striving for sustainability

By Aoife Moynihan

The Green Schools Collective uniting students with a common goal

The Green Schools Collective (GSC) now in its fifth year, involves students from nine Mosman schools, coming together to collaborate on environmental issues and sustainability.

Local public, Catholic, and private schools meet for an hour once a term, with a different school hosting each time. The students use the meetings to showcase the environmental initiatives they are working on at the school.

GSC director, Jenni Hagland, who has two daughters at Queenwood, is contracted by Mosman Council to coordinate the collaboration.

"I usually give the hosting students a half hour at the beginning of the meeting," says Jenni. "They might do a PowerPoint presentation and they get to show us their gardens or the solar panels."

"We usually leave the last 15 minutes for students to share if they've done anything great in the last term at their school, or teachers can ask questions," explains Jenni.

The GSC is a great way for schools to share knowledge and ideas and schools benefit from hearing about initiatives that others have implemented and what worked for them.

"It just helps motivate other schools," says Jenni. "It's a healthy sense of competition and a good source for ideas and advice so they don't have to reinvent the wheel every time. Everyone's really supportive of each other. It's our little network coming together and helping each other get stuff done quicker."

Jenni says it is wonderful to see students from public, private and Catholic schools working together.

"These schools would usually not work together," says Jenni. "They all know each other quite well now, and they're sharing ideas and information. It's such a beautiful atmosphere. We usually afternoon tea at the schools and everyone's just chatting. It's a great group."

The GSC also hosts beach clean-ups once a term for the whole school

community. There was one at Balmoral Beach in February to celebrate 35 years of Clean-Up Australia Day. Jenni says it was a great morning full of 'collective community spirit.'

"I'm always reluctant to book a clean-up at Balmoral because council sweeps that beach a lot," explains Jenni. "I told the students it was a pretty clean beach, but to go out to the island, or go to the oval - or into the bushes," Jenni laughs.

"After a summer at Balmoral, you wouldn't believe the amount of trash they collected in 45 minutes! Unbelievable! A mountain of rubbish," Jenni says. "It was impactful, and I think that would have resonated with the students." **NL**

GSC COMMUNITY CLEAN UP

12pm to 1.30pm

Saturday, June 14

Reid Park, Mosman Bay

linkedin.com/company/green-schools-collective