



Pymble Ladies' College

Media Release

29 January, 2011

Governor launches new era in education

The Governor of NSW, Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, officially opened the new Senior School Centre – Kate Mason Building at Pymble Ladies' College today, Saturday 29 January 2011.

“The new Centre allows visionary concepts for educating future generations,” said College Principal, Mrs Vicki Waters. “Educating for the future is about preparing young people for a world which requires flexibility, problem solving skills, technology skills, analytical skills and team work. It is no longer about just teaching content.”

The unique design of the building combined with cutting-edge technologies provides the framework for a learning community and paves the way for teachers and senior students to develop a learning culture based on partnership, the generation of ideas, innovation, multi-tasking using 21st Century technologies and creativity in searching for solutions.

“The College’s reputation as a world leader in the education of girls and young women will be enhanced by this specialist learning environment dedicated to the unique developmental and educational requirements of students in Years 11 and 12.”

“As educators we recognise the growing independence of senior students and their strong sense of personal responsibility as they enter their final phase of formal education. Allowing these students to make responsible decisions that suit their varying commitments prepares them for the less structured worlds of tertiary study and the workplace,” said Mrs Waters.

The building has been named in honour of Mrs Kate Mason, former Chairman of the College Council (2001 – 2010), College Council member (1998 – 2010) and former parent of three students at the College.

The College has partnered with Cisco, a world leader in networking technologies, to showcase the new learning environment as a centre for innovation in education, giving *Pymble* students access to leading edge technologies.

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"Cisco is extremely proud to join Pymble Ladies' College in creating the momentum for change today with the opening of the Senior School Centre to help transform education so that it is relevant to the needs of 21st century learners. Video and collaborative technology from Cisco will play a critical role in the development of engaging curricula and learning spaces that will equip Pymble students with 21st century skills such as creativity, critical thinking and collaboration," said Ken Boal, Director of Public Sector for Cisco Australia and New Zealand.

The design of the building affirms the College's commitment to environmental awareness, sustainability, recycling and carbon emission reduction. Green features of the Centre include mixed mode air-conditioning, low-energy floor heating in main areas, movement / daylight sensor-controlled lights, high performance glazing and high levels of insulation, rainwater harvesting for WC flushing and irrigation and the building has been assessed as achieving 82% savings against baseline energy efficiency requirements of the Building Code of Australia.

Design features include flexible, high visibility rooms for single and multiple classes, cutting edge information technology, a 260 seat lecture theatre, a circular conference room equipped with immersive and life-like, high-definition video conferencing facilities suitable for collaborative work and meetings and spaces for students to work, study and relax.

The Cisco Conference in the Round, a room uniquely shaped with its state-of-the-art audio visual and video conferencing facilities sets a benchmark for multimedia learning space in Kindergarten to Year 12 education. It allows for maximum technology enablement of education with sophisticated Cisco technologies offering connectivity, speed and collaboration to provide a connected learning environment for Pymble students and in particular our Years 11 and 12 students, our next generation workforce.

Specific Cisco technology in the centre includes high definition video conferencing, Unified Communications, Digital Media Signage, IP voice and video collaboration and Cisco Cius tablets which are not yet commercially available in Australia.

Staff rooms are based on each level allowing teachers to be readily accessible to students. The flexible open space design with common room and coffee shop provides spaces for students and staff to mix freely and to work together in a comfortable environment.

The Senior School Centre – Kate Mason Building will help to ensure students complete their secondary education with the confidence, maturity and necessary skills to make informed decisions in their careers and future personal lives.

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