For many years CGHS has had a significant profile in Sustainability. A summary of action is below:

2005

In 2005 a wide range of significant school and community environmental programs culminated in the recognition of Canterbury Girls as the winner of the National Sustainable Schools’ Competition. The award is an acknowledgement of years of work in monitoring and improving the Cooks River and the local environment, of working with other schools and in raising and promoting environmental awareness in our school, others and the broader community. Our environmental educational programs are characterised by strong student involvement, enriched extra-curricular activities and student based research of the school’s sustainability. Moreover programs such as Streamwatch, the eco-audit and the links with other schools have been embedded into science and technology programs which enrich student learning.

2006

2006 was the seventh consecutive year in which our school has been recognised as a state leader in this area. CGHS again took out the Overall Excellence Award and the Water Conservation Award from Sydney Water Streamwatch. These state achievements not only recognise our ongoing water testing and conservation programs along the Cooks River, they in fact are based on all our initiatives in environmental education. Based on the results of extensive eco-audits, recycling initiatives and student analysis of resource management, staff and students worked together to be awarded a $38 000 Water Conservation Grant. This will be spent during 2007 on five rainwater tanks and water saving fixtures in student toilet blocks.

Our students were key players in a Council sponsored World Environment Day and also hosted and planned a Regional Leadership Environmental Forum. As a result we have now trained teams of years 7 and 10 students to act as environmental ambassadors for our school, the Region and the wider community. All aspects of our education initiatives involve interactions with such agencies as Canterbury City Council, Sydney Water, Botany Bay Field Study Centre, Canterbury-Hurlstone Park RSL Club and a range of media outlets.

An outstanding example of our involvement with outside agencies is that CGHS was declared Sustainable Schools Champions of State-wide Sustainable Living Challenge organised by the UNSW. Students also presented a PowerPoint at the Awards ceremony and another at a State Water Symposium.

The high profile of our school and the breadth and depth of our environmental achievements can only be explained by the high levels of motivation from large numbers of students.

2007

Our school remains a leader in sustainability and student participation in this area. Student leadership and action have led to an increase in biodiversity and a
significant decrease in water usage because students and staff have continued to secure grants which have now led to the installation of six water tanks, solar heated showers, extended native gardens and recycled water in use in all student toilet blocks and on much of our gardens. Funds from a Commonwealth Water Grant enabled the installation of additional water tanks and the installation of water saving taps and all toilets were installed with dual flush systems. Sydney Water donated $4000 to the school to assist in having toilets connected to tank water and the student push for greater water efficiency.

Furthermore, our initiatives in water testing and student education have seen us recognised as a leading school at both state and national levels. This culture of environmental awareness and action also extends to many aspects of our school curriculum. This is supported by a “Green” student group which meets on a daily basis to plan and implement further school wide activities.

2008

Our school remains a leader in environmental sustainability and student participation in this area. Student leadership and action have led to an increase in biodiversity and a significant decrease in water usage. Furthermore, our initiatives in water testing and student education have seen us recognised as a leading school at both state and national levels. This culture of environmental awareness and action also extends to many aspects of our school curriculum. This is supported by a “Green” student group which meets on a daily basis to plan and implement further school wide activities. Activities include:

- Tread Lightly Community Information Day
- Student construction of a frog bog
- Ongoing garden development by parents and students
- Participation in Regional Year 9 environmental debate at Parliament House
- Green DEAR students managed to reduce consumption of electricity across the school by 21.3% compared to the base week in Term 3 resulting in a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (CO2) of 6733.1kgs. This resulted in a $568.80 reduction in the cost of electricity for the trial period.

2009

The school continues to make advances in Environmental Education. Green DEAR is an environmental student group that meets during DEAR four times a week. The students are a proactive group who take part in environmental initiatives throughout the year. In 2009, Green DEAR were involved in ‘Clean up Australia Day’, ‘Plant a Tree Day’, ‘Tread Lightly Day’ and several environmental projects with Observatory Hill which included an electricity saving competition and assisting in an Ultra Eco Tour. In addition, the students attended an environmental debate at Riverview College on ‘Can Red Meat be Green?’. Canterbury Girls High School has already installed many eco-friendly features, including timers on lights and water tanks to provide for toilets and gardens. In the near future, further steps are being taken to keep Canterbury clean and green, including Solar panels and energy saving lights.
Canterbury Girls has adopted a sustainability statement to direct future environmental learning and action at the school. As a consequence of this, it is intended that each faculty will conduct a KLA audit on learning for sustainability and sustainable resource management. These actions will assist in preparing for the introduction of the Australian Curriculum which will include a mandatory perspective on sustainability.

As a part of our environmental education program, we have a Green DEAR group at school involved in the following programs:

- establishing and maintaining a kitchen herb garden at school
- constructing a memorial garden for Melissa Kamara, a Green DEAR member who sadly passed away in April, 2011
- observance of World Environment Day and Earth Hour
- participating in Clean Up Australia Day 2011.

The Green DEAR group of Canterbury Girls is proud to share their achievements with the school community.

Canterbury Council announced the inaugural City of Canterbury Sustainable Schools Award winners. Canterbury Girls High School won the runner-up Sustainability Champions award for 2011. The Green DEAR and the school community acknowledge the encouragement given by the Canterbury Council to keep our environment clean and green.

Canterbury Girls High also won the Canterbury Council Best School or Community Garden Award in 2011, a testament to the hard work of students, parents and staff. Canterbury Girls High hosted a Canterbury Environmental Network Meeting for teachers from local schools to report on initiatives and share ideas.

In 2012, Canterbury Girls adopted a sustainability statement to direct future environmental learning and action at the school. As a consequence of this, it is intended that in 2013 each faculty will conduct a KLA audit on Learning for Sustainability and Sustainable Resource Management.

As a part of the school’s Environmental Education Program, Green DEAR Group coordinated a number of successful initiatives in 2012: establishing and maintaining a kitchen herb garden at school; maintaining memorial gardens at the school; observing World Environment Day and Earth Hour; participating in Clean Up
Australia Day; and implementing the Waste Minimisation Project to collect green wastes from the canteen and Food Technology classes. The school also achieved Second Place in the Canterbury Council Gardening Awards in the Sustainable and Water Wise section. As part of the Climate Clever Energy Savers program Green DEAR had a workshop day during which they investigated Climate Change and produced a plan to reduce the carbon footprint of CGHS. As a consequence they were awarded a grant of $1,000 to install timers on power points throughout the school. Year 7 Geography and Science classes also participated in the project and LEGO renewable energy kits were purchased to supplement future classroom learning.