



The John Berne School
&
Pete's Place School

Annual School Report to the Community
2011

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MISSION STATEMENT

At the heart of Berne there is a relationship between Jesus and Mary, lived out through the example of Marcellin Champagnat.

In this spirit, we welcome those students who have struggled to find their place in main-stream schooling.

Within our inclusive community, and with a sense of connectedness, we live out this relationship with these students, enabling them to see beyond their troubles and daring them to dream. In this way, we encourage them to adopt in their lives the motto: *"Hope Always"*.

This journey at Berne will allow them to open new doors, building foundations and opportunities for the future.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

The John Berne School, Lewisham, is registered by the Board of Studies (NSW) and managed by the Trustees of the Marist Brothers', the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The *Annual Report to the School Community* for this year provides the school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education.

The *Report* also outlines information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance to the school community during the year and the achievements arising from the implementation of the school's Strategic Plan.

This *Report* complements and is supplementary to school newsletters and other regular communications. The *Report* will be available on the school's website by 30 June 2012 following its submission to the Board of Studies.

Further information about the school or this *Report* may be obtained by contacting the school on 02 9560 9260 or by visiting the website at www.johnberneschool.org.

PRINCIPAL: BR DARREN BURGE

DATE: 28 June, 2012

MESSAGE FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

Principal's Message

2011 was another year in the process of assisting students to find their place in our world by building their self-belief so that they can go out into society and make their own contribution to it. This year, 100 per cent of our graduates had a place in another school, at TAFE, an apprenticeship or full time work by the end of January.

It is pleasing to see that we are successfully meeting the aims expressed in our mission statement. This short but powerful statement sums up what it is we do here and the spirit with which we do it. It reads:

At the heart of Berne there is a relationship between Jesus and Mary, lived out through the example of Marcellin Champagnat.

In this spirit, we welcome those students who have struggled to find their place in mainstream schooling.

Within our inclusive community, and with a sense of connectedness, we live out this relationship with these students, enabling them to see beyond their troubles and daring them to dream. In this way, we encourage them to adopt in their lives the motto: *"Hope Always"*.

This journey at Berne will allow them to open new doors, building foundations and opportunities for the future.

We provide an environment, characterised by a family spirit, which allows troubled young people to feel at home and create foundations for a brighter future. The positive relationships that our students have with the adults in this community are at the heart of this. The hard work and continuing attempts at improving and refining our professional practice flow from this genuine care.

I pay tribute to and offer my thanks to all our staff members, whether teachers, counsellors or support staff and our generous volunteers for their care of our young people.

Br Darren Burge

Principal

Parent Representative Message

As a parent it is extremely difficult to put into words where our children would be without The John Berne School. Berne has been a God send to many teenagers and their families.

I never thought in a million years that I would hear my son say during the holidays he was looking forward to going back to school.

John Berne is an alternate pathway for many boys/girls who don't fit into the "mainstream" schooling system. With its unique teaching style and approach to our children, it certainly keeps them engaged in their education and restores their self esteem.

I commend staff on their partnership with parents. The high levels of commitment and communication have been extremely professional. It has given us all the tools to empower our children to learn and strive for their future.

I would like to thank all the supporters for their time and hard work in obtaining donations for the school. We are forever indebted and ever so grateful. It has helped the school and students in so many ways and it has given them access to positive opportunities and experiences.

It is my privilege on behalf of the parents to thank Principal Br Darren Burge, Deputy Principal James Le Huray and the dedicated staff for all their support and encouragement to parents and students throughout their time at Berne.

Alison Esposito

Parent

SCHOOL FEATURES

The John Berne School is an Independent Catholic School under the care of the Marist Brothers offering a positive option for students (Years 7, 8, 9, 10) whose education is at risk. The students are enrolled on the basis of diagnosed disability and/or inability to cope in mainstream schools. The John Berne School is a coeducational day school. The school's motto, *Hope Always*, reflects the fundamental belief that intervention in the lives of troubled people is always worthwhile.

The John Berne School caters for a culturally diverse community with around 45 students and employs 25 staff. In August 2011 (combining enrolments from The John Berne School and Pete's Place) there were 81% male students and 19% female students and 7% of students identified as indigenous. Our Language Background Other Than English (LBOTE) enrolments comprised 22% of the school populations.

The high student to staff ratio is essential to the success of the school which provides, in addition to a complete curriculum, a number of special programs for our students and their families including:

Family and Student Counselling

Counselling is a central part of our work at Berne. Each student is assigned a Counsellor who meets with him/her each fortnight to assist with their behavioural needs. The Counselling team also conducts Parenting Programs and other practical support to families.

Breakfast Program

Our *Breakfast Program* not only meets the nutritional needs of students, but in sharing this meal together each day, with adult care and supervision, students have the opportunity to settle before classes begin and improve their social skills. At the end of the long journey to school from all parts of Sydney, students need a good breakfast. Research shows that student performance is enhanced by approximately 50% as a result of a nutritional breakfast.

Student Withdrawal Assistance Program (SWAP)

SWAP offers a supervised environment in the short term for students who have been facing significant troubles in their mainstream school. It provides a forum for thorough assessment of a student's cognitive and academic strengths and weaknesses as well as disturbances in mood and behaviour. This program aims to provide other schools with an affordable service which allows them to respond more appropriately to the special needs of students who are struggling.

Learning Advancement Centre (LAC)

The LAC supports students in their educational engagements and pursuits on a one-on-one level. This enables us to target their specific individual needs.

Cracking the Code Literacy Program

The students participate in a program that addresses their literacy needs. This is a direct instruction program that takes place four times per week for thirty minutes and is based on university research. It aims to enable students to access the curriculum more effectively. Students with even greater need are identified and further weekly instruction addresses their specific needs.

Outdoor Education Program

Demanding outdoor challenges helps students to develop their personal attitudes and values of self-esteem, motivation, confidence, team work and responsibility. A camp or outdoor activity is conducted each term.

Skills for Living Program

Our Skills for Living Program encourages personal and social development and training in daily living skills such as the preparation of healthy meals, developing a budget, shopping within a budget, time management, self awareness and interacting with others in a respectful and constructive manner.

job ready! Program

Berne has in place a range of vocational preparation courses to prepare its students for the workplace. Teaching skills like writing a job application, interview techniques and telephone protocol, the program also instructs students on appropriate workplace behaviour and communication in its nine week work experience placement course in Years 9 and 10. The Work Education unit for the School Certificate is also completed as part of this program.

Changing Lanes Program

Changing Lanes is for ex-Berne students who need help with the next stage of their lives. The Coordinator of this program offers extra help in finding a job or starting an apprenticeship or other course.

A more detailed description of all of these school programs can be found on our website at www.johnberneschool.org.

School Features – Pete’s Place School

Pete’s Place School is a campus of The John Berne School. It is an alternative school setting which aims to meet the social and educational needs of marginalised young people who have been excluded from, or have not coped with, mainstream education. Pete’s Place school is a coeducational day school and enrolls students from Years 7 – 10.

In August 2011 there were 56% male students and 44% female students and 22% of students identified as indigenous. Our Language Background Other Than English (LBOTE) enrolments comprised 22% of the school population.

Staff Pete’s Place: 3 x full time teachers + 1 x part time teacher’s aide
No indigenous staff

CATHOLIC LIFE AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

In 2011 we embraced the Province theme of “Around the Same Table: A Place for All”. Our commencement liturgy at the start of the year challenged the school community to ask the question “who is gathered around our table?”. Essentially the answer was each and every one of us. We bring to the table all aspects of our lives, the good, the bad and the ugly! The message to take from this theme was that we are in it together; God won’t let us down.

St Marcellin wrote that as educators “we may be the only Gospel that our students will encounter”. At Berne, we strive to witness this every day. Our morning meetings begin with staff prayer with our inspiration from the Marist prayer book.

Opportunities for Staff spiritual development are offered regularly with staff participating in programs such as “Sharing Our Call” and other Ministry Office initiatives including the Religious Educators Conference in Los Angeles. On Staff Days throughout the year, time is often set aside for spiritual reflection and input from the Marist Ministry Team.

The annual pilgrimage to the Hermitage in Mittagong on Holy Thursday is always a highlight of the RE program at Berne. Taking the entire school through the pine trees on the “Way of the Cross” is a unique experience. The friendly, yet obvious rivalry between the year groups whilst playing touch football on the oval at Mittagong is one of those community building moments that stays with you.

The Religious Education program is, by necessity, quite fluid by nature. The students have a thirst for knowledge and the direction of class discussion often takes the teachers by (pleasant) surprise.

Regular liturgies on special occasion throughout reinforce the importance of our Catholic rituals. It is however, through the compassion and care of the staff, through their actions and empathy with our students, that true Gospel values are witnessed at Berne. The school motto of “*Hope Always*” is witnessed daily as we endeavour to make Jesus Christ known and loved in our community.

SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The John Berne School is an Independent Catholic school, owned and operated by the Marist Brothers. This school adheres to the Board of Studies syllabus for each of the courses offered. The school has obtained registration for five years.

Subject coordinators ensure that aims, outcomes and teaching and learning activities are delivered in a meaningful way. The teachers and their respective subject areas use cross-curricula and I.C.T. tasks to assist with such a delivery.

The John Berne School offers the five mandatory courses of: Science, Mathematics, Geography, History and English. Other courses offered include: PDHPE, Visual Arts and Religious Education. In our Years 7 and 8 extra subjects such as Technology (mandatory), Art , L.O.T.E. (Italian) and Music are offered.

The Skills-Based Program (Cracking the Code) has continued to successfully provide students with the necessary literacy skills they need to fully access the curriculum.

This year a new subject, Work Education, was offered to Year 9 and Year 10 in preparation for their work experience and to give them insight into entering the work force.

Our Learning Advancement Centre continued to be utilised effectively for some students requiring a more one-to-one delivery and break-down of the curriculum.

School Curriculum – Pete’s Place School

Pete’s Place School provides an Individual Education Plan for each student designed to meet their particular learning needs.

Pete’s Place School offers the School Certificate in the following core subjects: English, Maths, Science, History, Geography.

Pete’s Place School also offers the option of a Life Skills School Certificate. It also offered Work Experience for Year 10 students.

The staff of the head school provide resources, support and staffing assistance in addressing curriculum in this smaller context.

Staff provide regular opportunities to improve Living Skills such as cooking. Pete's Place School also offered an Outdoor Education Statement of Attainment in partnership with Blue Mountains TAFE. It also offers Work Experience for year 10 students. There was a weekly Fitness Program (July – December). The SHINE Program was offered (June – December) for girls which promotes individuality, sense of purpose and self-worth.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN TESTS

National Assessment Program in Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

At the time of the 2011 NAPLAN assessments The John Berne School did not have a Year 7 cohort. Therefore, all the results recorded for 2011, are for the Year 9 cohort.

Students in Year 9 sat the National Program in Literacy and Numeracy in May 2011. Although the NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy, these results provide more relevant information to the school teachers and would be difficult to interpret in a broader context. Parents and those who are interested in the performance of students at the school would be advised to discuss individual attainment.

As the school is a special school designed to provide education to students at risk, the student population is small and highly variable from school term to school term. Different intakes of students each term reflect different literacy and numeracy skill levels. Mostly we endeavour to include all students in the NAPLAN assessment, even though some of our students would have been excluded from the assessment in traditional school settings.

Many of our students participate in intensive literacy and numeracy programs which show considerable growth over time. This may not be reflected in the NAPLAN results as the student may have just begun the program before the assessment and will need a longer period of treatment, or the student has entered the school with literacy and numeracy results that preclude them from attaining high results in the NAPLAN assessments at that time.

The school's performance in spelling has consistently risen from 2008 to 2011. We believe this is the result of the intensive programs at the school. Intensive reading programs are decreasing the amount of

students who are scoring in the bottom reading bands. We believe that the reading programs show very good student growth toward the end of Year 10 and after the students have completed the reading programs.

The table provided below shows the percentages of students who achieved particular skill bands in numeracy and aspects of literacy. The school results shown are compared to students nationally. Literacy is reported in four content strands: Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Numeracy is reported in a single content strand.

NAPLAN results 2011		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	All schools	School	All schools
Year 9	Reading	18%	20%	45%	23%
	Writing	0%	21%	80%	33%
	Spelling	10%	23%	30%	23%
	Grammar & Punctuation	0%	19%	50%	27%
	Numeracy	0%	24%	64%	25%

Source: My School <http://www.myschool.edu.au>; Additional information can be viewed at this website.

In 2011, **Pete's Place School** did not register any students for participation in NAPLAN testing.

School Certificate – The John Berne School

Students in Year 10 sat for the School Certificate examination in November this year. The table provided shows the percentage of students who achieved in the top two bands and shows comparison with results from previous years.

	School Certificate: Percentage of students in top 2 bands (Bands 5 and 6)					
	2009		2010		2011	
	School	State	School	State	School	State
English Literacy	13%	41%	5%	37%	13%	39%
Mathematics	13%	24%	0%	28%	0%	25%
Science	18%	37%	5%	42%	6%	32%
Australian History	13%	23%	0%	19%	13%	26%
Australian Geography	0%	28%	10%	27%	6%	24%

The students attending this school are all at risk of not completing the School Certificate because of their behavioural and emotional disorders. Some are school refusers and have not succeeded in a

mainstream setting. In addition, a number of our students have significant issues with literacy and numeracy. This is the lens through which these results should be viewed. The completion of the School Certificate is in itself an achievement. As a result, the achievement of 13% of our cohort attaining bands 5 and 6 in English literacy in 2011 is an outstanding achievement. The significant difference between the three years represented in each subject is an indication of the many variables that impact on the lives of our students.

School Certificate – Pete’s Place

One student from Pete’s Place was awarded a School Certificate at the end of 2011 and one student received a School Certificate (Life Skills) in English and Mathematics. For issues of confidentiality, their results are not identified in this report.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND TEACHER STANDARDS

Professional learning – The John Berne School

It was our aim this year to ensure that all teachers, especially those at Professional Competence level, were targeted for continued development. As well as those staff presentations held within the school, many external presentations relating to specific subject areas were on offer.

In 2011 a number of staff undertook Professional Development as a means of improving and extending their learning. This also assisted in the improvement in class delivery for our students. Some of the In-Services included:

- When to Worry; Identifying students at risk
- Mathematics – alternate assessment techniques
- Identifying positive behaviours and dealing with the negative
- Science - Engaging students through context
- L.O.T.E - A language day like no other
- History – Twilight conference
- Senior First Aid
- A Framework for a better understanding of the clinical processes within child therapy
- Early intervention in psychosis
- Creating a school where boys thrive
- Multimodal therapy in complex post-traumatic stress
- Child Protection Workshop

Professional learning – Pete’s Place

- Restorative Practices
- Supporting Young People with Mental Health/AOD Issues
- Effective Teamwork
- Compassion Fatigue
- Positive Psychology Workshop
- Therapeutic Crisis Intervention
- Suicide and Self-Harm
- Child Protection
- Attachment Theory
- ACU Leadership
- Supervision Support Training Modules

Teacher Standards

The following tables sets out the number of teachers on the school staff who fall into each of the three categories determined by the Board of Studies:

Teacher Qualifications – The John Berne School	Number of Teachers
1. Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	16
2. Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	0
3. Those not having qualifications described in 1 or 2 above but having relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate relevant knowledge.	0

Teacher Qualifications – Pete’s Place	Number of Teachers
1. Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	3
2. Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	0
3. Those not having qualifications described in 1 or 2 above but having relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate relevant knowledge.	0

TEACHER ATTENDANCE AND RETENTION

The average teacher attendance rate during 2011 was 95%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave. The teacher retention rate from 2010 to 2011 was 87%.

Other specialist positions at Berne included two full-time and one part-time Counsellor, Chaplain, Careers Adviser and administration support staff. Berne operates a school canteen employing a Canteen Manager and a Breakfast Program Co-ordinator.

Teacher Attendance and Retention – Pete’s Place School

The average teacher attendance rate during 2011 was 97%. The teacher retention rate from 2010 to 2011 was 50%.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Attendance Rates – The John Berne School

The average student attendance rate for the school during 2011 was 79%. School attendance rates disaggregated by year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Year 7	95%
Year 8	78%
Year 9	70%
Year 10	87%

Students attending Berne are enrolled on the basis of diagnosed disability and/or inability to cope in mainstream schools. Attendance rates fluctuate annually reflecting the personal situations of the student cohort at the time.

A number of our student population are school refusers or have had poor attendance records at previous schools. If a student is not at school by 9.30 am the office staff make a telephone call to the parents or caregivers. This serves to make parents accountable for the whereabouts of their son/daughter. The students are aware of this policy and our adherence to it. Consequently, truancy is rarely an issue.

Our preparedness to work with parents, including through *our Parenting in Practice* course, helps parents to deal with students who are refusing to come to school and establishes a good relationship with the school. The alternative education program we have in place here and the individual planning reduces the incidence of non-attendance as students find the program more appropriately tailored to their needs than a mainstream school can achieve. However, in more extreme cases the Principal or

member of the leadership team, accompanied by a counsellor or the Chaplain, will visit the family home to address the issues and bring the student to school.

Student Attendance – Pete’s Place School

The average student attendance rate for the school during 2011 was 70%. School attendance rates disaggregated by year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Year 7	80%
Year 8	49%
Year 9	81%
Year 10	69%

Each student has an individualised Weekly Attendance Planner as part of their Individual Education Plan.

Student non-attendance at Pete’s Place School is responded to by:

- Contact with parents or carers to notify re non-attendance;
- Discussion with student and parents or carers regarding reason for absence;
- Regular non-attendance would necessitate a meeting with the student and their family or carers.

POST SCHOOL DESTINATIONS

Each year the school collects destination data relating to the Year 10 student cohort.

Fourteen students successfully completed their School Certificates in 2011 at The John Berne School.

The school continues to operate two programs, the *job ready!* and *Changing Lanes Programs*, aimed at the development of employability skills through participation in a range of activities, including participation in weekly Work Education lessons, the Year 10 Expo and work experience placements each term in Years 9 and 10.

During 2011:

- More than 100 employers provided work experience opportunities for students in Years 9 and 10.

- Students participated in a learning program designed to meet BOS Work Education subject outcomes, which was closely linked with outcomes associated with an AQF Certificate I in Business Services.
- Parents attended events at school that were specifically designed to help them help their children make decisions about what do to when they left Berne.
- A Careers Expo was held for Year 10 students and their parents and carers, and was attended by representatives from industries identified by students as being of interest to them.
- Students sought assistance in getting their tax file numbers, opening bank accounts and finding part time work while still at school.
- Just under half of the 2010 graduating students made contact with the school as part of the *Changing Lanes Program* seeking assistance. This number was augmented by a smaller number of students from previous years, too, maintaining contact through *Changing Lanes*.

As at March 2012, graduating students from 2011 (who completed the full range of programs at school) are represented as follows:

- 83% engaged in full time study of Year 11 courses
- 17% engaged in full time employment (apprenticeship or general employment).

The School has seen an increase in the number of students continuing to Year 11. This move has been supported by a number of schools who have provided innovative study programs for the 2011 Year 10 cohort, largely engaging them in a range of VET and other non-ATAR HSC subjects as part of their course of study. The School remains in contact with these students and their schools, providing support where needed.

To summarise, 100% of Year 10 graduates, nearly six months after graduation, are engaged in full time study or employment.

Post School Destinations – Pete’s Place School

As at March 2012, graduating students from 2011 are represented as follows:

- 50% engaged in full time employment (apprenticeship or general employment)
- 50% engaged in part time study at TAFE.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Amongst the various policies of the school is one entitled *Pastoral Care, Behaviour Management and Discipline*. This policy addresses student welfare and discipline. It explains the use of the Behaviour Management Record, the cornerstone of our behaviour management approach. This card makes a daily record of students' behaviour and application to tasks. It incorporates the bonus point system that encourages positive behaviour. The bonus point system has been changed and upgraded in recent times and we are in the process of adjusting this policy to reflect the change. The policy also outlines our behavioural expectations and the use of consequences in dealing with negative behaviour, including suspension and exclusion. The exclusion policy is consistent with the process required by the Marist Brothers Sydney Province in their independent schools. Exclusion would only be used in rare cases and requires the Principal to consult with the Regional Director of Marist Schools Australia. The policy includes references to the part played by the counsellors in working with students to achieve better outcomes in the many dimensions of their lives. Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this school. The school does not sanction administration of corporal punishment by school persons and non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline in the school.

The *Staff Code of Conduct* and the *Child Protection Policy* were updated towards the end of the school year. The leadership team reviewed these and they were also amended by external experts to ensure they reflect current law and practice. A new policy was developed with the assistance of the Catholic Commission for Employment Relations called the *Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) and Electronic Communications Policy*. This aims to outline the school expectations in regard to information technology and communication for staff members.

The school's *Complaints Policy* and *Grievance Policy* are based on procedural fairness and recognise that parents, caregivers and school staff must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive and conciliatory environment. Any concerns raised are responded to promptly and fairly and confidentiality is always maintained.

Full text of school policies can be obtained from The John Berne School office at 1 Thomas Street, Lewisham NSW 2049.

Enrolment Process

Children from families who are prepared to support Catholic ideals and principles may be considered eligible for enrolment. Priority is given to referrals from Catholic schools, however special consideration may be given to individual cases from other school systems.

The essential factor in offering a position at the school is whether the environment and service we offer can contribute to the child's development, assisting them to address the behavioural, emotional or social challenges they face. There must be a hope that we can make a difference in this child's life. If not, we are at risk of contributing to another failure that will further erode the young person's esteem.

The Enrolment Counsellor gathers data from the previous school and family. A psychological assessment may also be required before making a decision about the child's appropriateness for Berne. This data is presented to the Principal for consideration.

Parents / carers are interviewed by the Principal before an enrolment is finalised. The documents required at the interview include the child's Birth Certificate and immunisation records. A passport, with documents validating the child's current VISA status, is also necessary if the child does not hold Australian citizenship. Previous school reports, reports from medical practitioners, psychologist reports and any relevant medical records are also needed.

Total fees are made up of the tuition fees, materials fees and our enrolment charge. The school has the policy of keeping the total fees similar to a Catholic systemic school. A pastoral approach is adopted for parents experiencing genuine difficulty with the payment of fees.

This enrolment process is consistent with the enrolment policy and philosophy of the Marist Brothers of the Sydney Province for their congregational schools.

Pete's Place School adopts the same policies as the head school for enrolment, student welfare and discipline. The complaints and grievance policies are policies of Marist Youth Care and can be obtained from their head office 36-38 First Avenue, Blacktown NSW 2148.

SCHOOL DETERMINED IMPROVEMENT TARGETS

The refinement of Individual Education Plans has been an essential part of the school program throughout 2011. The new Transition Unit in 2011 has paved the way for the evolution of our individual plans by providing the necessary structure to identify student needs and to set up the appropriate goals to deal with these matters. It has been evident that the program has enabled students to settle into the school. The staff has also been meeting to develop a new proforma for the capturing of data and the communication with stakeholders. By the conclusion of the year we had a significantly better tool that was designed for our purposes in this specialised environment.

Professional development in ICT was a critical aspect of the school targets for 2011. The majority of staff members have completed the Web 2.0 course to enable them to grow in confidence so that they can

begin to explore new ways of delivering the curriculum in the classroom. The improved infrastructure and the establishment of a new platform (Moodle) have encouraged this growth and have laid the foundations for more flexible delivery with students. This is a growth area and in 2012 we will continue to grow our capacity in this area with further professional development and teacher collaboration.

Increased focus and effort will be placed on a more integrated delivery of the curriculum in our classes. Teachers will collaborate to establish common assessment projects that meet a variety of outcomes across subject areas. This more integrated, project based approach to assessment tasks will engage our students in a new way.

The Finance Advisory Committee made a closer examination of the financial sustainability of the school into the future and identified some goals it needed to meet in the short term in order to place the school in a stronger position. A more strategic approach to the fundraising activities was one dimension of this. The movement of the major fundraising lunch to a larger venue allowed for the expansion of the event and aimed to attract a greater diversity of people from the business community. This was the most successful event we have conducted and the movement now allows the school to develop the numbers further in 2012.

The Regional Council of Marist Schools Australia initiated a whole school review in late 2011. The aim of this review, which is to be held in May 2012, is to look at the way forward for the school and explore the possibilities of new models of service delivery. This will be a critical moment in the short history of Berne. A panel of external experts will conduct this review.

In the latter part of 2011 the school entered a new partnership with the Dunlea Centre, formerly known as Boystown. The focus of this partnership is on professional development opportunities that are mutually beneficial. We have initially identified the main target area as being on behavioral management issues and associated topics. A meeting of a combined committee will be held early in 2012 to identify the key areas of need that are shared between the two institutions.

A small building project, sponsored by the Sydney Catholic Education Office, was set for completion by the end of January 2012. This will allow for the development of three new rooms – science laboratory, hospitality centre and a new classroom space. A more modern science laboratory will enable better delivery of the modern curriculum and the establishment of the hospitality centre will complement our Friday activities program and the weekly flexible learning classes.

School Determined Improvement Targets – Pete’s Place School

Priority areas for improvement for the reporting year and the following year:

- To continue to develop an appropriate version of the School Certificate curriculum for use at Pete’s Place School and continue building up the required resources for delivery of this program;
- To continue to seek and establish links to various community service providers, especially in the area of mental health support;
- To participate in Professional Development opportunities as part of The John Berne School community.

INITIATIVES PROMOTING RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

Berne is built on the foundations of respect and responsibility which staff and students strive to develop together on a daily basis. Staff interactions with one another around the students always aim to model behaviour that furthers these values. Staff interactions with students emphasise the importance of respect in building strong and enduring relationships.

The *Behaviour Management Record* (BMR) card gives students a constant visual and written reminder that they must take responsibility for their own actions. The cards are used in class where students’ are rated as satisfactory, needing improvement, or unsatisfactory; a rating other than satisfactory results in a one-time consequence at the end of the day where students are kept back in order to discuss the issue with their teacher. Giving students the time to discuss the situation promotes self-reflection and self-awareness and the importance of taking responsibility and accepting consequences. Bonus points are also awarded for behaviour and actions that exceed expectations and these can be used for a range of rewards including several that benefit a group of students rather than just the individual student and it is not uncommon that students select these rewards to share with their peers.

Team work, self-confidence, attitude, awareness of the needs and abilities of others are all developed during the camps and other activities that form Berne’s *Outdoor Education Program*. Students participate in three camps during the year which aim to broaden their perspectives. This gives them the space to reflect on and modify their behaviours and attitudes through physical challenges and experiences in non-urban environments which many students have had little or no exposure to. These camps teach valuable life skills and help with socialisation and improve peer relations. Students have many opportunities to work independently and collaboratively across a range of activities.

Berne is fortunate to have regular guest speakers who engage the students on a range of issues. In particular, there are the *Enough Is Enough*, and *Youthsafe* programs that aim to present to students the

realities of life through sharing personal stories of tragedy. The *Youthsafe* program connects students with the personal stories of the presenters who have sustained a serious injury as a direct consequence of their own behaviour or attitude. They encourage students to consider their responsibilities in different situations, especially those where many think that nothing could have been done. Having the courage to stand up for oneself and take ownership of a dire situation to change the outcome for themselves and sometimes their peers is a difficult part of life but the consequences for not doing this are presented to them in the flesh and help to serve as examples.

Ken Marslew is the founder of the *Enough Is Enough* program and shares with the students his own story of violence and the loss of his son. The program explores personal responsibility and seeks to reduce community violence which often leads to senseless and tragic circumstances. His attempts at reconciliation with the transgressors demonstrate the strength and courage needed by individuals to face the realities of bad decisions made by others. Ken discusses his experience of the system of restorative justice which is practised here at Berne.

A restorative approach to resolving conflict is an initiative which brings great success to staff and students at Berne. Adversarial and punitive systems do not give all parties the same flexibility to resolve conflict on a level that is required to maintain and teach empathy and responsibility to students. All parties are given the time to speak and to listen to the points of view of those involved and resolution is often mutually satisfying in both forgiveness and atonement. Students go through the process when they have conflict with other students as well as with staff. These meetings are arbitrated by staff and counsellors and allow everyone to rebuild together.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility – Pete’s Place School

Pete’s Place School community promotes at all times the fundamental importance of respect.

On display throughout the school are our Student Expectations:

- Respect of other students
- Respect of staff
- Respect of property
- Respect of self

These values are modelled by staff at all times and are a regular point of reference in conversations with students. Living Skills activities such as cooking and shared meals facilitate a broader range of interactions where respect and responsibility shown by students can be improved. Excursions and participation in programs beyond the school such as Outdoor Education provide an excellent learning opportunity for young people regarding respect and responsibility. Female students are able to participate in the SHINE program which promotes self-respect.

PARENT, TEACHER AND STUDENT SATISFACTION

In 2011 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school and the service it is providing.

Parents have agreed to work in partnership with the school to achieve the best results for their son or daughter. The school has increased the number of interviews with parents in regard to how their child is progressing. This has increased their participation in the construction of the child's individual education plan and allowed the school to make an assessment of how we are meeting the needs of the child. A key point of enquiry to parents is in regard to how we are responding to the needs of their child, which gives us immediate feedback about how we are progressing as a school. The "Parenting in Practice" program that parents are expected to commit to is another avenue for this review an evaluation. Towards the latter part of 2011, we conducted telephone interviews with most parents regarding the effectiveness of the chaplaincy programs and other broader issues at the school. The response was overwhelmingly positive with 90% recording their satisfaction.

The primary avenue for feedback and discussion is offered to staff on a daily basis with our morning and afternoon meetings. There is an opportunity at most of these meetings for discussion and feedback on various issues. This is especially the case at our longer staff meeting each Thursday afternoon. Staff development days give staff a chance to feedback on issues impacting on them and their teaching. At the conclusion of 2011, a formal structured evaluation and review of the year was conducted. This review was most positive with high levels of satisfaction being indicated. It was also an opportunity to note issues that could be improved and developed as we move into the future.

At the conclusion of Year Ten, the school conducts a process for the students to review their time at the school and the progress they have made. Part of this process, is to assess the impact the school has had on their behavioural and academic progress. Last year, we also accessed the talents of an external facilitator who helped to lead this process. High levels of satisfaction are recorded amongst the Year Ten 2011 with 100% of them indicating that the school had had a positive impact on their own growth. Interviews with other students around their goals for their individual education plan also allow them to raise issues of concern and assist us in molding how we support their goals.

Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction – Pete’s Place School

Parents reported at the end of 2011 that they were pleased with the regularity of students’ attendance at Pete’s Place school. They described noticeable positive changes in their child’s motivation for school work and confidence around learning. Parents also described improvements in their child’s behaviour at home such as being less aggressive, calmer, better at coping with stress and being happier. Parents also expressed a high level of satisfaction with staff at the school and described their work with students as patient, understanding, dedicated, good role models, child-centred and solution-focussed. They were also very appreciative of daily contact with them by the staff and found this helpful.

Teacher satisfaction at Pete’s Place School is generally high.

The passion and empathy required by professionals who choose to work with marginalised young people motivates them to work hard to create positive relationships with students. The staff gain enormous satisfaction from the outcomes achieved by our students, whether they be behavioural, social or academic. The complex needs of the young people who attend Pete’s Place School sometimes result in obstacles to their success which are beyond the influence of teaching staff. This can be disheartening for staff at times, however, they value very highly the opportunity they have to make a positive difference in the lives of these disadvantaged young people.

Students reported, at the end of 2011, finding it easier to learn at Pete’s Place School because of 1:1 assistance by staff, the calm secure environment and having input into their own education plan. They described feeling more confident and positive about themselves because they felt they were achieving. Students also gave feedback about their relationships with teachers as being very helpful – saying they felt cared for, supported, motivated and treated as an equal.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT – The John Berne School

SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The financial position of The John Berne School has been audited by VJ Ryan Chartered Accountants.

Statement of Income and Expenditure for year ended 31 December 2011

<u>REVENUE</u>	\$
Fees – Tuition	110,951
Fees – Others	24,749
	<hr/> 135,700
Interest	6,303
State Govt Grants – General Recurrent	121,944
Commonwealth Govt Grants – General Recurrent	1,082,588
Club Grants	58,200
Special Education & Special Disabilities	2,000
Province	380,000
Tuckshop (Deficit)	(9,565)
Donations	31,897
Fundraising	85,045
Profit on Disposal of Non Current Assets	8,550
Bad Debts Recovered	35,460
Other Income	826
	<hr/>
<u>TOTAL REVENUE</u>	1,938,948
<u>LESS EXPENDITURE</u>	
Tuition Expenses and Materials	1,793,626
Administration and General Running Costs	210,437
	<hr/>
<u>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</u>	2,004,063
	<hr/>
<u>(DEFICIT)/SURPLUS FOR THE PERIOD</u>	<u>(65,115)</u>

FINANCIAL STATEMENT – Pete’s Place

The financial position of Pete’s Place School is maintained by Executive Manager Financial & Corporate Services – Marist Youth Care.

Summary of Financial Information to December 2011

REVENUE	\$
Fees – Others	6,829
State Govt Grants	75,592
Commonwealth Government Grants	40,878
Marist Youth Care – Internal Recoveries	210,598
Other Grants	10,000
Donations	<u>10,171</u>
Total Revenue	354,068
 EXPENDITURE	
Salaries, Allowances & Related Expenses	276,246
Non-Salary Operating Costs	<u>77,822</u>
Total Expenditure	<u>354,068</u>
 Surplus/Deficit for Period	 <u><u>0</u></u>

SUPPORTERS OF THE JOHN BERNE SCHOOL

The John Berne School would like to express thanks for the support it received during the year from organisations and individuals in the wider community including: Ashfield RSL Club; Bullant Sports; Canterbury Bulldogs; Catholic Education Office Sydney; C.I.R. Property Maintenance; Coca Cola Amatil Pty Ltd; Club Ashfield; Cooley Auctions; Earlwood Ex-Servicemens Club; Ex-Marist Mothers' Association; Flexi Commercial; Former Members Association; Fugen Constructions; Illawarra Catholic Club; Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club; PaKay Pty Ltd; Marrickville Council; Rotary Club of Burwood; St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill; St Thomas Becket Parish, Lewisham; Strathfield Sports Club; Wests Ashfield.

We are also very grateful for the constant support of our many volunteers. It would not be possible to achieve everything we do at this school if it wasn't for the valued assistance of our volunteers who provide support to us in so many ways including day-to-day classroom assistance; Special Examination Provisions; Careers days and motivational speakers; grounds and equipment maintenance; support on camps and excursions; fundraising; and help in the Canteen.

The John Berne School would like to acknowledge and thank all of the work experience host employers who generously gave of their time and shared their knowledge with our students. More than 100 businesses supported the *job ready! Program* in this way during 2011.

Thanks also to all those people who provided financial support and who wanted to remain anonymous. Your financial and moral support is appreciated by staff, students and families.