



The John Berne School

&

Pete's Place School

Annual School Report to the Community
2015

School Contact Details:

The John Berne School

1 Thomas Street, Lewisham NSW 2049

Locked Bag 6, Petersham NSW 2049

office@johnberneschool.org

www.johnberneschool.org

02 9560 9260

Principal

Br Mark Paul fms



Pete's Place 151 Reservoir Road, Blacktown NSW 2148

02 9671 7260

ABOUT THIS REPORT

The John Berne School, Lewisham, and Pete's Place School, Blacktown, are registered by the Board of Studies (NSW) and managed by Marist Schools Australia, the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The *Annual School Report to the Community* provides parents, carers and the wider 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 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 2015 following its submission to the Board of Studies (BOS).

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 MARK PAUL fms

DATE: 23rd June, 2016

SECTION ONE: MESSAGE FROM KEY GROUPS IN OUR COMMUNITY

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

2015 was another year in the process of assisting students who have found their way here having struggled in mainstream schools to find their place in our world by educating them as well as building their self-belief to make their own contribution to the world. This year, a significant number of our graduates gained a place in a school, a TAFE, an apprenticeship or full time work by the end of 2015.

This is the last year of the five year strategic plan and provided many opportunities for new initiatives and preparations for the development of a three year plan for the following year. The refinement of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) to provide the necessary structure to identify student needs, increased focus on a more integrated delivery in the area of curriculum and the development of a social skills program to address students' anti-social behaviour.

We provided an environment, characterised by a family spirit, which allows troubled young people to feel at home and create foundations for a brighter future. The relationships our students have with the adults in this community are at the heart of our work.

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

PARENT BODY MESSAGE

It is a pleasure to write this report on behalf of the parents of The John Berne School. This is a very small school and does not have a P & F Association like most mainstream schools, however parents are invited to join in school fundraising activities such as the annual school luncheon and golf day.

Parents are always made to feel very welcome at school and we are invited to attend a parent information evening every Term to keep informed about what is happening at the school and to discuss their child's progress. If we have any concerns about our child, teachers and counsellors can also be reached by telephone and are always very helpful. The school publishes a newsletter regularly which keeps us informed about school events.

Class sizes are very small here which means that teachers are able to devote more time to each student. We are grateful to The John Berne School for helping to keep our children at school and give them an education.

STUDENT BODY MESSAGE

At the conclusion of Year 10, students are invited to write a statement about their experience of, and satisfaction with, the School. Some of the comments made by the Year 10 graduating class of 2015 are shown below. These comments are representative of those of the student cohort.

- *The teachers have helped me a lot since I arrived at Berne. They have helped me get things sorted out and helped me organise what I want to do when I leave Berne.*
- *Berne has helped me focus on my work. I have actually done more work here than I have ever done in my whole school life. Berne has given me a chance to get my life back on track and it has been great.*
- *I love how the school takes care of you when you are not having a good day. I love how the volunteers are so helpful and make me laugh when I'm feeling sad. I love the teachers for helping me through every challenge that comes my way.*
- *Berne gives you lots of chances and support to get things right. Mainstream schools don't tend to give you as many chances.*
- *Since I've been here I've grown as a person and matured both in and outside of school. I am much more honest about myself and my behaviour.*
- *The John Berne School has helped me by assisting me to control my temper and my depression.*
- *Being at The John Berne School helped me change by helping me understand what's appropriate and what's not.*
- *I have achieved a lot of things at Berne - my behaviour has improved, I don't back-chat as much and I don't really get in fights and arguments. I have also caught up on a lot of work.*

SECTION TWO: SCHOOL FEATURES

The John Berne School, a work of Marist Schools Australia, a Catholic Special School catering for boys and girls in Years 7-10. The school provides an opportunity to help those students who are at risk of not completing their education because they present with challenging social, emotional, behavioural or academic needs and are not coping in mainstream schools. It provides educational, personal, social and family services with the goal that they will make a successful transition into the next phase of their lives. In addition to a complete curriculum, a number of special programs for our students and their families including:

Family and Student Counselling

Counselling is an essential part of our work at Berne. Each student is assigned a Counsellor who meets with him/her each fortnight in assisting them with addressing significant emotional needs. The Counselling team also conducts Parenting Programs and provides 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.

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 exercising responsibility.

Skills for Living Program

Our Skills for Living Program encourages personal and social development and provides 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 curriculum at The John Berne School also includes a Work Education unit for Year 9 and 10 students.

Changing Lanes Program

Our Changing Lanes Program 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 education options.

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

Pete’s Place is a campus of The John Berne School. It is an alternative school setting which aims to meet the social, emotional and educational needs of marginalised young people who have been excluded from, or have not coped with, mainstream education. Pete’s Place is a coeducational day school and enrolls students from Years 7 – 10. The Mission and Values of both Marist Youth Care and The John Berne School form the basis of our philosophy and way of working with young people at Pete’s Place.

SECTION THREE: STUDENT PROFILE

STUDENT ENROLMENT

The School caters for students in Years 7 – 10. Students attending this School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for The John Berne School and Pete’s Place School for 2015:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total Students
12	48	27%	8%	60

*Language Background Other than English

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 or his representative 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 and materials fees. 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 Marist Schools Australia for their congregational schools.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATES

The average student attendance rate for 2015 was 74%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Year 7	67%
Year 8	69%
Year 9	88%
Year 10	69%

MANAGING STUDENT NON-ATTENDANCE

Students attending The John Berne School 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 and the parents or caregivers have not contacted the school office to explain the absence, our office staff contact the parents or caregivers to ascertain their whereabouts.

Our preparedness to work with parents, including assistance provided by our Counsellors, helps parents to deal with students who are refusing to come to school and establishes a good relationship with the school. The alternative education programs provided by The John Berne School and the individual educational planning reduces the incidence of non-attendance as students find the program more appropriately tailored to their needs. 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 provide further assistance.

STUDENT POST SCHOOL DESTINATIONS

Each year the School collects destination data relating to the Year 10 student cohort. Eleven students successfully completed Year 10 in 2015 at The John Berne School.

The School continues to operate two programs, the *Job Ready* and *Changing Lanes Program*, which are both aimed at the development of employability skills through participation in a range of activities, including participation in weekly Work Education lessons, the Year 10 Careers Expo and Work Experience placements each term for students in Years 9 and 10.

During 2015:

- More than 100 employers provided work experience opportunities for students in Years 9 and 10.
- Parents attended events at school specifically designed to help them assist their children in making career and educational choices after leaving The John Berne School.
- 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.
- Grant funding was used to provide White Cards (Construction Induction Training Card) for 14 students in Years 9 and 10.
- The *Changing Lanes Program* provided assistance to students after they left school.

As at the end of April 2016, Year 10 students from 2015 (who completed the full range of programs at School) are represented as follows:

- 55% engaged in full time study of Year 11 courses at another school
- 18% undertaking an apprenticeship or other employment
- 9% repeating Year 10 and engaged in full time study at another school
- 9% engaged in a transition to work program
- 9% job seeking

STUDENT PROFILE – PETE’S PLACE

In August 2015 there were 40% male students and 60% female students. 10% of students identified as indigenous. Our Language Background Other Than English (LBOTE) enrolments comprised 10% of the school population.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATES – PETE’S PLACE

Year	Male	Female
Year 8	67%	33%
Year 9	50%	50%
Year 10	31%	69%

MANAGING STUDENT NON-ATTENDANCE – PETE’S PLACE

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

Student non-attendance at Pete’s Place 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
- Letters of concern are sent to highlight consistent attendance concerns and their impact

STUDENT POST SCHOOL DESTINATIONS – PETE’S PLACE

As at March 2016, graduating students from 2015 are represented as follows:

- 25% enrolled in an alternative school to complete Year 11
- 16.6% enrolled in a mainstream school to complete Year 11
- 25% pursued study at TAFE
- 16.6% employed
- 8.4% enrolled in TAFE to complete Year 11
- 8.4% destination unknown

SECTION FOUR: STAFFING PROFILE

STAFFING PROFILE – THE JOHN BERNE SCHOOL

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2015:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
18	6	24

* This number includes 14 full-time teachers and 2 part-time teachers and 2 teachers on leave.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	0%
--	----

STAFFING PROFILE – PETE'S PLACE

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2015:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
4	2	6

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	0%
--	----

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING – THE JOHN BERNE SCHOOL

The ongoing professional development of each staff member is highly valued at The John Berne School. Professional learning can take many forms including whole school staff days, subject specific inservices, meetings and conferences and a range of professional learning programs provided by the Catholic Education Office Sydney and independent organisations. All teachers have been involved in professional learning opportunities during the year related to improving student outcomes including:

- Senior First Aid and CPR
- Dr Ross Greene - Managing challenging behaviours in children and adolescents
- Empowering others to lead and manage instructional improvement
- Professional learning to support special needs students
- Wesley Mission Suicide Prevention
- Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorders, practical strategies
- Transforming literacy learning through drama
- Resourceful Adolescent Program (RAP)

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING – PETE’S PLACE

In 2015 staff undertook Professional Development as a means of improving and extending their learning. This also assisted in the improvement in classroom delivery for our students. Some of the In-Services attended include:

- Reporting Workshop : Berne Staff Development Day
- Assessment (Pete’s Place)
- Student Support Plans (Pete’s Place)
- Program Logic Workshop (Marist Youth Care)
- Case Presentations (Pete’s Place)
- Autism Spectrum Disorder – Introduction (Pete’s Place)
- Reflective Practice (Pete’s Place)
- New Schools Briefing (BOSTES)
- Teacher Accreditation Authority (BOSTES)
- Alternative Education Conference (Association of Independent Schools)

TEACHER STANDARDS

The following table sets out the number of teachers who are responsible for delivering the curriculum at The John Berne School and Pete’s Place School who fall into each of the two categories defined by the *Teacher Accreditation Act 2004*:

Teacher Qualifications	Number of Teachers
1. Having teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines	21
2. Having a bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications	0

SECTION FIVE: CURRICULUM

The John Berne School adheres to the NSW Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) syllabus for each of the courses offered as required for Registration and Accreditation under the Education Act 1990 (NSW). We have obtained registration until 2019.

Subject coordinators ensure that all programs include outcomes, teaching and learning activities and assessment tasks which are accessible by students at all academic levels. Classes are small in size making the learning environment conducive to:

- student-centred teaching and learning methods
- one-on-one attention
- a positive and collaborative relationship between student and teacher
- differentiating learning to cater to low, medium and high abilities
- interactive, innovative and interesting teaching and learning strategies are employed which support the principles of Authentic Learning
- enhanced student agency allowing greater ownership of their own learning
- students building relevant skills and a greater knowledge of key information becoming better prepared for success in the future

The John Berne School offers the five core BOSTES courses of: English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities (Geography and History) and Personal Development Health Physical Education (PDHPE). As well as the following additional subjects in each stage:

Stage Four: Visual Arts, Music, Technology (mandatory), Languages Other Than English (Italian), Religious Education, Computer Studies.

Stage Five: Religious Education, Work Education, Flexible Learning.

CURRICULUM – PETE’S PLACE

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

Pete’s Place facilitates completion of ROSA (Record of School Achievement) in the following core subjects: English, Maths, Science, History, Geography and PDHPE. Pete’s Place also offers the option of a Life Skills ROSA.

The staff of The John Berne School provide some resources, support and staffing assistance in addressing curriculum in this smaller context and the remainder is created by Pete’s Place staff.

Staff provided regular opportunities to improve Living Skills such as cooking and maintaining a vegetable garden.

There was a weekly Practical PE Program, RAGE (Renegotiating Angry and Guilty Emotions) and the SHINE Program was offered for girls which promotes individuality, sense of purpose and self-worth.

SECTION SIX: STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN STATE-WIDE TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM IN LITERACY AND NUMERACY

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. An analysis of these results assists school planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

The tables below show the percentages of students who achieved particular skill bands in numeracy and the aspects of literacy. The School results shown are compared to students nationally. Literacy is reported in four content strands (aspects): Reading, Persuasive Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Numeracy is reported as a single content strand. The results shown below are for The John Berne School and Pete’s Place School.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2015		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 9	Reading	8%	21%	50%	23%
	Persuasive Writing	0%	14%	83%	40%
	Spelling	0%	24%	50%	22%
	Grammar & Punctuation	0%	17%	50%	29%
	Numeracy	17%	24%	58%	18%

The *My School* website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing. Click on the link My School <https://www.myschool.edu.au/> and insert the school name in the *Find a school* tab and select *GO* to access complete NAPLAN school data.

Record of School Achievement (RoSA)

Students who have successfully completed Year 10 are eligible to request a Record of School Achievement (RoSA). This is issued by the Board of Studies, as requested by students who have discontinued their schooling.

The John Berne School:

In 2015 the number of students issued with a RoSA	11
---	----

STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN STATE-WIDE TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS – PETE’S PLACE

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM IN LITERACY AND NUMERACY

In 2015, Pete’s Place had two Year 9 students who participated in NAPLAN testing.

Record of School Achievement (RoSA) – Pete’s Place

In 2015 the number of students issued with a RoSA	12 *
---	------

* This figure includes two RoSAs in Life Skills

SECTION SEVEN: PASTORAL CARE AND WELLBEING

STUDENT WELFARE AND DISCIPLINE 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 (BMR), 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 Marist Schools Australia 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.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The John Berne School adopts a whole school approach to anti-bullying. A staff consultation process resulted in the continued revision of our Anti-Bullying Policy this year. Regular communications about bullying have been published in our school newsletter and parents have engaged in the formulation of the School's anti-bullying policy. Further communication and discussions will again occur at our Parent Information Evening at the commencement of the 2015 school year and more workshops will be planned throughout next year concerning our procedures for dealing with bullying behaviour. The School's Anti-Bullying Policy is reflective and consistent with the National Framework for Safe Schools.

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES RESOLUTION POLICY

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.

INITIATIVES PROMOTING RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

Everyday practice at The John Berne School is inspired by the life and work of St Marcellin Champagnat. His statue at St Peter's Basilica depicts a young boy riding on the shoulders of Saint Marcellin. This seemingly simple symbol encapsulates the essence of our work here; lifting young people up so that they can expand their horizons and find their own place in the world. At the core of belonging to a community is having self-respect and respect for others as well as being a responsible member of a group.

Staff encourage students to participate positively in group activities at recess and lunch such as touch football, tennis and handball as well as board and card games. Staff achieve this through their own participation and modelling. It is important that the students are aware that we all share a responsibility in creating a culture that does not accept intimidation or bullying but rather promotes care and understanding. Specific procedures have been established so that if an incident of bullying was to occur then students, teachers and parents are made aware of the processes that would then be put in place.

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 develop 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.

The Whole School Art Program once again gave students the opportunity to develop skills in self-expression and self-confidence through visual arts. The students worked with a tutor in individual and small group sessions to build these skills which then culminated in a group project. The success of the project was evident in students' willingness to display their own work alongside others and appreciate the different expressions of individual's artistry.

Teamwork, 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.

Activities week in Term 2 aims to give students the opportunity to experience the diverse range of people and places and their associated culture around Sydney. Students are challenged to understand and respect their role as members of society.

The Immersion Program involved the entire school to support a group of staff and students to travel to Timor Leste where they experienced firsthand the challenges that are faced daily by its locals. All students had the opportunity to learn about the history, environment, and hardships of the country. Upon their return, the group shared their time there and helped to develop the empathy and appreciation for the East Timorese spirit with everyone at school.

PASTORAL CARE AND WELLBEING – PETE’S PLACE

Pete’s Place is a secondary school specifically for young people who present with complex needs. It offers a therapeutic approach to young people who have experienced significant trauma and neglect early in their lives. Learning and interactions are tailored to the young person’s individual needs.

Pete’s Place takes a holistic approach to education, regularly consulting with external mental health professionals, parents and carers, external agencies such as Family and Community Services, and other relevant parties involved in the young person’s care.

Pete’s Place utilises a Restorative Practices model with students.

Regular meetings are also held with each student. This is a Strengths-Based conversation with the young person that explores both achievements and challenges. It also provides an opportunity to brainstorm alternate, more constructive responses to difficult situations.

INITIATIVES PROMOTING RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY – PETE’S PLACE

Pete’s Place 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, shared meals and gardening facilitate a broader range of interactions where respect and responsibility shown by students can be improved. Participation in programs within the school such as RAGE provide an excellent learning opportunity for young people regarding respect, cooperation and self management. Female students are able to participate in the SHINE program that promotes self-respect. Restorative Conversations and Circle promote the value of each individual as well as our responsibilities to one another as members of a community.

SECTION EIGHT: SCHOOL REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT

KEY IMPROVEMENTS ACHIEVED IN 2015

The John Berne School implementation of the Strategic Plan for 2015 sets out a number of areas for review and continued improvement this year. There are six strategic priority areas and within each of these areas key improvements were achieved in 2015. Below are the strategic priority areas along with the achievements

- 1) **Catholic Identity, mission and Religious Education** - Prayer at the beginning of each day for staff and also for students in roll call groups has now become part of the daily routine. Religious Education programs have been further refined and linked to some of the key social issues of our time. Liturgies for feast days and Special ceremonies achieved greater student participation and an enhanced spiritual experience.
- 2) **Student Learning and Achievement** – The Individual Education Plan (IEP) committee has been instrumental in educating all staff on best practice for the use of IEPs to be the source for monitoring and assessing achievement for student progress. The use of technology to improve recording and learning outcomes has been implemented with research being undertaken to determine best computer programs to utilise in the learning process.
- 3) **Quality Teaching, Curriculum and Professional Learning** - The School Curriculum Committee has been instrumental in addressing the Curriculum achieving Phase I of the Australian Curriculum in English, Mathematics, History and Science. Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) approved registration of the school during this year affirming the achievements made in this area. All staff during this year achieved the accredited hours for their professional development requirements. Students completed an in-house Vocational Education and Training (VET) course with a review of assessment policy and procedures. A whole school numeracy program was integrated into the daily timetable and the literacy program has expanded to incorporate more students. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) have been a necessary part of the school program throughout 2015 and have been improved as a significant driver in guiding best teaching practice. The professional development of staff in best practice in dealing with the management of challenging behaviours; researching and planning best options for refurbishing learning areas to better address the needs of the students; strengthening the wider community engagement of students in more community

service activities and improvement in the use of computer programs in enhancing learning and the recording of data and outcomes has been achieved.

- 4) **Student Welfare and Well-Being** - Anti-Bullying education and practices were reviewed with short courses provided. A parenting program was delivered over a 5 week period for strengthening relationships. Relationships with the well-being department of Sydney Catholic Schools are in place. Professional development workshops for staff in the areas of student management, anger and disengagement were carried out to improve the wellbeing of the whole community.
- 5) **Human Resources Management** - Recruitment of dynamic teaching staff qualified in special education. Staff continued their professional development, set professional learning goals and plans and established effective supervision for their development.
- 6) **Sustainability, Governance and Business Planning** - Development Officer continues to source avenues of financial support as well as sourcing specific student course offerings for our students. The Financial Advisory Committee has sought new committee members to provide a broader spectrum to the advice necessary. For long-term sustainability a survey was conducted with Sydney Catholic Schools' Principals and Deputies on future options for the school in improving our practice. A Fundraising Advisory Committee was established to source more long term funding donations. Confirming the governance structure of the school is in line with the state legislation was achieved.

PRIORITY KEY IMPROVEMENTS FOR 2016

A new Strategic Plan will be on the agenda as the Strategic Plan (2013-15) has run its course. This planning will draw on what has been helpful from the current Strategic Plan as well as drawing on the Sydney Catholic Schools model of frameworks.

Five Strategic Priority areas will be the focus of the Plan:

- Catholic Identity and Mission
- Learning and Teaching
- Student and Staff Wellbeing
- Capacity Building
- Stewardship of Resources

Improvement of school building infrastructure is being planned for with an anticipated refurbishment and new building program for commencement in October 2016. This lead up time is to design the facilities to best suit the educational culture for the students.

Continued efforts to improve the Literacy and Numeracy programs to best serve the needs of the students will be carried out with retraining of teachers and bringing a specialist teacher on to staff to help in this. The adoption of the Mindfulness program will be a key improvement in the training of teachers in this program with implementation anticipated in 2016.

SCHOOL REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT – PETE’S PLACE

KEY IMPROVEMENTS ACHIEVED IN 2015 – PETE’S PLACE

- Writing of teaching programs by Pete’s Place staff for the subjects of English, Mathematics, History, Geography, Science and PD/H/PE
- Creation of Life Skills teaching programs
- Successful application to BOSTES to become an independent school
- Students from all year groups completed a range of assessment tasks for each subject
- There were 13 students enrolled in Year 10 and 12 students completed requirements for their ROSA (1 student left NSW)
- PE practical lessons were facilitated enabling each student to participate once a week
- Weekly Life Skills Drama and Visual Art lessons
- Some Year 10 students participated in Work Experience
- Excursion to The Sydney Museum and Geography Field Trips
- Training of new staff in Practical Trauma-Informed Practice to enhance established therapeutic approach
- Restorative Circle 3 mornings per week
- Revitalisation of cooking program resulting in greatly improved engagement by students and improved eating behaviours

PRIORITY KEY IMPROVEMENTS FOR 2016 – PETE’S PLACE

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

- To continue to develop an appropriate version of the Year 7 - 10 curriculum for use at Pete’s Place and continue building up the required resources for delivery of this program
- To increase the staff’s capacity to deliver personalised learning for students

- To expand the staff's skill set in utilising technology for personalised learning
- To continue to seek and establish links to various community service providers, especially in the area mental health support
- To use Restorative Circles three mornings a week as means of improving student communication skills and connectedness, as well as promoting a sense of community
- To participate in Professional Development opportunities as part of The John Berne School community and independently
- To participate in external Professional Development opportunities particularly relevant for working with students who have complex needs focussed on issues such as anger management and the impact of trauma
- To include weekly lessons for all students in Life Skills Visual Art and Life Skills Drama
- To support students to participate in work experience
- To support students to participate in NAPLAN
- To remodel the cooking program to create opportunities to teach living skills, improve attitudes to eating, build staff/student relationships and improve student attitudes about eating
- To create tools for collecting data about daily student engagement and participation
- To establish documentation and practices for all areas required by BOSTES for registration and accreditation as an independent school

SECTION NINE: PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION

The opinions and ideas of parents, students and teachers are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students.

PARENT SATISFACTION

The John Berne School maintains a consistently high level of communication with parents and caregivers to facilitate a combined effort towards achieving best outcomes for students and to gauge parent satisfaction. This communication is conducted with regular telephone calls, individual meetings and twice yearly formal parent / staff strategic planning meetings.

At the end of each school year, parents and caregivers are invited to provide verbal feedback on the effectiveness of the school's *Job Ready Program* in preparing students for making the transition from Berne to work or to other learning environments.

Parents and caregivers indicated they were happy with the level of support they received, and saw that the Program had been of benefit. Respondents were mostly able to make specific comments on the type of support they received, and half of them offered constructive advice as to how to improve the Program. Identified in most responses was the recognition that individualised assistance had made a difference to their child's experience at Berne.

Follow up with phone calls in the first months of the school year following Year 10 graduation to each family, to confirm commencement of graduates in their chosen field of work or study. In 2015, these phone calls were made during week 4 of Term 1, with 95% of past families participating in this phone survey. Without exception all respondents acknowledged the positive impact the school made on their son/daughter and were pleased to have been contacted regarding this element of continued support offered by the school.

STUDENT SATISFACTION

At the conclusion of Year 10, students are invited to write a statement about their experience of and satisfaction with the school. Some of the comments made by the Year 10 graduating class of 2015 are shown below. These comments are representative of those of the student cohort.

- *The teachers have helped me a lot since I arrived at Berne. They have helped me get things sorted out and helped me organise what I want to do when I leave Berne.*
- *Berne has helped me focus on my work. I have actually done more work here than I have ever done in my whole school life. Berne has given me a chance to get my life back on track and it has been great.*
- *I love how the school takes care of you when you are not having a good day. I love how the volunteers are so helpful and make me laugh when I'm feeling sad. I love the teachers for helping me through every challenge that comes my way.*
- *Berne gives you lots of chances and support to get things right. Mainstream schools don't tend to give you as many chances.*
- *Since I've been here I've grown as a person and matured both in and outside of school. I am much more honest about myself and my behaviour.*
- *The John Berne School has helped me by assisting me to control my temper and my depression.*
- *Being at The John Berne School helped me change by helping me understand what's appropriate and what's not.*
- *I have achieved a lot of things at Berne - my behaviour has improved, I don't back-chat as much and I don't really get in fights and arguments. I have also caught up on a lot of work.*

TEACHER SATISFACTION

Members of staff are invited to offer their feedback at daily morning and afternoon staff meetings in an open forum.

Teachers appreciate the opportunities of ongoing professional development for improving pedagogical and behavioural modification practices. This learning has helped the staff shape, evaluate and develop the school's Annual Improvement Plan.

PARENT SATISFACTION – PETE’S PLACE

Parents reported at the end of 2015 that they were pleased with the regularity of students’ attendance at Pete’s Place. 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 or anger and being happier. They spoke about students becoming ‘more self-aware’. They stated that students were “socially mixing with their peers”, “more confident a lot of the time”. 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 appreciated the willingness of Pete’s Place staff to consider a range of options in supporting students. They were also very appreciative of daily contact with them by the staff and feedback whenever there were concerns; “the communication is wonderful at Pete’s Place. To know the staff really cared and took lots of interest in my child is a great relief.” Parents reported that any behaviour issues were addressed promptly and resolved; “the restorative conversations have been a big help and she is able to express herself more freely now.” They also highlighted that the smaller student numbers made it easier for their child to succeed.

STUDENT SATISFACTION – PETE’S PLACE

Students reported, at the end of 2015, finding it easier to learn at Pete’s Place because of 1:1 assistance by staff, the smaller number of students, the calm secure environment and having input into their own education plan. They liked the flexibility around individualised planning of both curriculum and support. Some mentioned achieving some independence. Some students stated they had never liked school before but enjoy attending Pete’s Place, saying they felt more motivated. They described feeling more confident and positive about themselves because they felt they were achieving. Other comments included being able to communicate about their feelings and feeling respected. Students also gave feedback about their relationships with teachers as being very helpful – saying they felt cared for, supported, motivated, understood, that they got more help with work and were treated fairly.

TEACHER SATISFACTION – PETE’S PLACE

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 sometimes result in obstacles to their success that 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. As professional educators, working at Pete’s Place

provides the opportunity to develop a very broad range of skills in differentiating learning and supporting students with complex needs.

SECTION TEN: FINANCIAL STATEMENT

FINANCIAL STATEMENT – THE JOHN BERNE SCHOOL

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 2015

<u>REVENUE</u>	\$
Fees – Tuition	132,146
Fees – Other	8,389
	<hr/> 140,535
Interest	1,894
State Govt Grants – General Recurrent	109,872
Commonwealth Govt Grants – General Recurrent	902,949
Community Grants	60,421
Special Education & Special Disabilities	-
Province Subsidy	500,000
Tuckshop (Deficit)	(8,599)
Donations	150,326
Fundraising	71,503
Other Income	231,574
	<hr/> 2,160,475
<u>TOTAL REVENUE</u>	<u>2,160,475</u>
<u>LESS EXPENDITURE</u>	
Tuition Expenses and Materials	1,805,821
Administration and General Running Costs	266,961
	<hr/> 2,072,782
<u>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>2,072,782</u>
<u>SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) FOR THE PERIOD</u>	<u>87,693</u>

FINANCIAL STATEMENT – PETE’S PLACE

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

**Pete's Place School
Summary of Financial statement for the period Jan to Dec 2015**

Revenue	
State Government grants	\$ 58,930
Commonwealth Government grants	\$ 486,143
Catholic Education Office grants	\$ 7,824
	<u>552,897</u>
Expenditure	
Staff salaries	\$ 397,938
Operating expenses	\$ 70,653
Support services	\$ 88,996
	<u>557,587</u>
Surplus (deficit)	<u>(4,690)</u>

SECTION ELEVEN: SUPPORTERS OF THE JOHN BERNE SCHOOL

The John Berne School relies on the generosity of others to help us provide services to young people with special needs and their families. This generosity comes from many different sources in the community including government, clubs, companies and other organisations including: Aikido Yoshinkan Marrickville; ASX Thomson Reuters Charity Foundation; Australian Catholic University; Belmore RSL Club; Belvoir Theatre – Youth Express Program; Books in Homes; Bullant Sports; Callaghers Real Estate; Campsie RSL Club; Canterbury Hurlstone Park RSL Club; Carroll & O’Dea Lawyers; Catholic Women’s League Summer Hill Branch, Causeway Financials; City Tattersals; Club Ashfield; Colonial First State; Doltone House; Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club; Ex-Marist Mothers’ Association North Sydney; Fugen Constructions; Illawarra Catholic Club; James Dominguez Cellars; JBWere Charitable Endowment Fund; Key Medical; Marist College Ashgrove; Marist College Kogarah; Marist Schools Australia; Marist Sisters College Woolwich; Sailors with DisABILITIES; SAS; STC – School Drama Program; St Ignatius’ College Riverview; St Joseph’s College Hunters Hill; St Patrick’s Catholic Parish Summer Hill; St Thomas Becket Parish Lewisham; Sydney Catholic Schools; Tenix Foundation; The Hands-Up Foundation; The Ramsay Foundation; VJ Ryan and Co.; Westpac; Wests Ashfield.

We are very grateful for the support of our many volunteers. It would not be possible to achieve everything we do at this school if it weren’t for the valued assistance of our volunteers who assist us in so many ways including day-to-day classroom support; grounds and equipment maintenance; fundraising; and help in the school canteen. We also acknowledge the generous support of the members of the Finance Advisory Committee and the Berne Fundraising Committee.

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 our *Job Ready Program* in this way during 2015.

Thanks also to all those many individuals and families who provided financial support and assistance throughout the year. Their financial and moral support is appreciated by The John Berne School staff, students and their families.