



The John Berne School & Pete's Place School

Annual School Report to the Community
2012

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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 2013 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 DARREN BURGE

DATE: 26 June, 2013

SECTION ONE: MESSAGE FROM KEY GROUPS IN OUR COMMUNITY

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

May 2012 was a key moment in the school's year when the whole school review was conducted. It is customary for schools in the Marist network to have these reviews every five or six years. This was an opportunity for a group of external experts to look closely at the school's processes, practices and service delivery. It provided affirmation of the school, an examination of the challenges we are facing and recommendations for the immediate future. One of these recommendations was the strategic planning process, which began in Term Four.

The resulting strategic plan marked the beginning of a new chapter in the school's history. The extensive work completed in Term Four has brought to birth a document that provides us with strategic directions and priorities for the coming three years. It has initiated and given impetus to a number of key developments, which will be begun in 2013.

One of the most exciting outcomes of our plan for 2013 is an action research project, which involves the entire staff. The research is a practical investigation of what other alternative schools with a similar cohort of students are doing to meet the educational needs of their students. We are looking for best practice in this work and will use our discoveries to reflect on our own program so as to shape what we do into the future. This will include looking at different models of service delivery. A series of visitations are being organised across Australia, in the United Kingdom, the USA and Canada. The *Empowering Local Schools Initiative* of the Federal Government is supporting this project.

The school review encouraged us to consider the employment of a Development Officer to take forward and expand our relationships with external bodies and co-ordinate our fundraising activities. We were pleased to welcome Ange Flannery in November, who has taken up the job with great energy and enthusiasm.

I look forward to the many other benefits that result from our new strategic plan and the associated activities.

In 2012 we also entered into a professional development partnership with Dunlea Centre Engadine (formerly Boystown). This project was motivated by the Federal Government's *More Support for Students with Disabilities Initiative*. This enables both schools to benefit from specialised professional

development, which better responds to the special needs of our students. It will continue into 2013 and beyond.

Finally, 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 BODY MESSAGE

We all came to Berne from another place. The beauty of The John Berne School is that while it never featured on one's secondary school education plan, there can be no doubt that Berne delivers the best outcome.

Very quickly, all that encounter Berne, realise things are different; the shorter school day, calling the teachers by their first name, the broad uniform policy and the Behaviour Management Record (BMR) cards. This most alternative "style" was a winner for both pupil and parent.

Indiscretions at Berne are dealt with quickly and we move on. No one holds a grudge and a track record is retained for achievements rather than the less wonderful moments. Patience is a commodity that is abundantly available at Berne.

Regardless of all external circumstances the students are lucky to have had time here.

This good fortune extends to the families and carers of the students at Berne. We are all better people because of this association. We have learnt much about children and probably more about ourselves.

To Br. Darren and all of your generous, thoughtful team we say thank you. Our gratitude will be perpetual. When things weren't working out the beacon of Berne was a true Godsend. The depth of our appreciation is well beyond words. Our curse is that other educational institutions will have to live by comparison and they just won't match up.

Good teachers are born not made. Great mentors are rare and we are amongst them here at Berne. The professional pride that every staff member applies to the kids at Berne is a reflection of how lucky we are.

STUDENT BODY MESSAGE

The John Berne School was effective. It was more of a community and helped bring students from all different parts of Sydney together.

The programs The John Berne School had to offer were very effective on us as a year group. The school helped motivate us and showed us the potential that we had. The staff helped boost our self-esteem and we enjoyed coming to school instead of dreading it.

The staff gave us a lot of support and were always there to help us when we needed it, we were never left unsure about what to do as we always had a mentor/teacher/friend to look out for us and help give us an understanding about what to do. Unlike other schools, The John Berne School gave us a lot more one on one time; something other schools cannot give because of the size of the classes. We were all given a lot time so all aspects of the curriculum were explained. This helped boost all of us as a year group as we could finally break a barrier and be able to accomplish a lot more things.

As a year group we are all grateful for the amount of mentoring we were given. The staff had a lot of counselling which other schools cannot focus on. This helped us so much as we would be able to vent things that were happening out of school that would affect our behaviours and attitudes at school. This was a major help to all of us as no matter what, we would always know that we had someone to depend on and guide us how to change our behaviour and how to deal with certain situations.

They also helped all of us have belief and hope in ourselves and each other. The John Berne School gave us a faith in ourselves that we didn't have before, and a belief that we could actually accomplish things in life and become something if we tried. They gave us hope that no matter what, we can change our ways and pick ourselves back up. This was a big boost to us as a year group because for once we believed that we could make it somewhere and that we could go out into the world or to finish year 12 and accomplish something and not be told that we wouldn't.

The John Berne School helped us all so much and proved that no matter what has happened there are always people with their arms wide open willing to give up their time to give us help and support, and give us faith that we can actually change and be better people. We want to thank all staff at The John Berne School for the amount of time they spent helping us become the better people you always knew we could become.

Student Representative, Year 10 class of 2012

SECTION TWO: 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 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 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. 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 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

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 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 2012:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
10	43	16	53

*Language Background Other than English

The enrolment trend in 2012 was consistent with previous years.

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 parishioners, 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.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATES

The average student attendance rate for 2012 was 83%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Year 7	-
Year 8	86%
Year 9	78%
Year 10	85%

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 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 POST SCHOOL DESTINATIONS

Each year the School collects destination data relating to the Year 10 student cohort. Thirteen students successfully completed Year 10 in 2012 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 Careers Expo and work experience placements each term in Years 9 and 10.

During 2012:

- The School introduced the Certificate I in Business course as part of the *job ready!* Program. Teaching both this nationally recognised qualification and the NSW BOS Work Education subject gave students opportunities to learn about and put into practice employability skills.
- More than 100 employers provided work experience opportunities for students in Years 9 and 10.
- Parents attended events at school that were specifically designed to help them help their children make decisions about what to do 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 2011 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 the *Changing Lanes Program*.

As at March 2013, graduating students from 2012 (who completed the full range of programs at school) are represented as follows:

- 79% engaged in full time study of Year 11 courses
- 7% engaged in full time employment
- 7% engaged in full time Transition to Work training
- 7% undecided

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 Vocational Education and Training (VET) and other non-Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) Higher School Certificate (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, 92% of Year 10 graduates, nearly six months after graduation, were engaged in full time study or employment.

STUDENT PROFILE – PETE’S PLACE SCHOOL

STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATES – PETE’S PLACE SCHOOL

Attendance rates by Year group	
Year 7	No students
Year 8	86%
Year 9	No students
Year 10	66%

MANAGING STUDENT NON-ATTENDANCE – PETE’S PLACE SCHOOL

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

STUDENT POST SCHOOL DESTINATIONS – PETE’S PLACE SCHOOL

As at March 2013, graduating students from 2012 are represented as follows:

25% enrolled in a special setting to complete Year 11

75% pursued part time study at TAFE

SECTION FOUR: STAFFING PROFILE

STAFFING PROFILE – THE JOHN BERNE SCHOOL

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2012:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
16	8	24

* This number includes 12 full-time teachers and 4 part-time teachers.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	0%
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STAFFING PROFILE – PETE'S PLACE

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2012:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
2	1	3

* This number includes 2 full-time teachers and 1 teachers' aide.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	0%
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PROFESSIONAL LEARNING – THE JOHN BERNE SCHOOL

At The John Berne School we highly value the ongoing professional development of each staff member.

As well as staff presentations held within the school focusing on improving student outcomes, many external presentations were held in conjunction with the staff at The Dunlea Centre, Engadine.

Together we shared whole school staff days on a range of topics such as;

- The Four Rooms of Change
- Drug Education with Paul Dillon
- Exploration and walking tour of Southern Cross College at Burwood

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING – PETE’S PLACE SCHOOL

In 2012 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 attended include:

- Working with Challenging Youth: Restorative Practices
- Mission and Values
- Bad Kids or Hurt Kids
- Child Protection Training
- Education Goals and Mac Technology
- Adolescents Coping with Emotion
- Therapeutic Crisis Intervention
- Supervision Support Training Modules
- Managing Challenging Behaviour in Children with Autism
- ‘That Yarn Was Deadly’: Working with Aboriginal Clients and Staff

TEACHER STANDARDS

The following table sets out the number of teachers at The John Berne School and Pete’s Place who fall into each of the three categories determined by the Board of Studies:

Teacher Qualifications	Number of Teachers
1. Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	17
2. Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	
3. Those not having qualifications described in 1 or 2 above but having relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate relevant knowledge.	1

SECTION FIVE: CATHOLIC LIFE AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The words of the Founder ring solid in the hearts and minds of the staff community at Berne ...

“To educate young people you must first love them and love them equally”

St Marcellin Champagnat

The daily opportunities and challenges to express the Spiritual and Religious identity of the School are woven within the fabric of our motto, *“Hope Always”*. *How* we do things is just as significant, if not more so at times, as *what* we do which influences the children in our care.

The 2012 Marist Province Theme of *“Encounter: Eyes wide open”* was the central theme to our community gatherings and liturgies. The Emmaus story of journeying and encountering the risen Lord along the path helped to focus our faith and belief that Jesus walks with us and is never far away.

Throughout the year we celebrated significant religious days. School Masses and other special liturgies are shared each term which reflect upon our Catholic identity. A beginning School Mass with an emphasis on the Province theme commences the year. Other School Masses were celebrated on Champagnat Day, The Feast of the Assumption and All Souls Day. The year concludes for the staff community with a thanksgiving Mass. Liturgies for Ash Wednesday, ANZAC Day, John Berne Day and our annual Holy Thursday pilgrimage for the Way of the Cross at the Marist Hermitage in Mittagong are special moments for the Berne community to gather in prayer.

Students and Staff have opportunities to actively participate in the liturgical rituals of the school with each assembly having input by different members of the Berne community. The staff gathers each morning for prayer prior to the daily meeting. Religious Education classes are opportunities for evangelisation as many in the student body come from a variety of backgrounds and religious experiences.

A highlight of the calendar is the Year 10 Graduation Mass and Ceremony. Staff, students, parents and supporters gather for this wonderfully uplifting evening where all the trials and tribulations of the year are forgotten. The students radiate a sense of pride and achievement which is emulated by all those present. We all look forward to what can be achieved in the lives of the young people before us. We hope that by our care and concern, the Berne Community has been a true Gospel witness to them.

SECTION SIX: CURRICULUM

The John Berne School adheres to the Board of Studies syllabus for each of the courses offered as required for Registration and Accreditation under the Education Act 1990 (NSW). 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 Information and Communications Technology (ICT) 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: Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) and Religious Education. In our Years 7 and 8 extra subjects such as Technology (mandatory), Art, Languages Other Than English (LOTE) – Italian, and Music are offered. In our Years 9 and 10 the extra subjects offered are Work Education and Flexible Learning.

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.

CURRICULUM – PETE’S PLACE SCHOOL

Pete’s Place provides an Individual Education Plan 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.

In 2012 we ran a pilot program in ‘Employment Preparation Training’ facilitated by Global Skills, a local Disability Employment Service. This was offered to all Year 10 students. The staff of The John Berne School provide resources, support and staffing assistance in addressing curriculum in this smaller context. Staff provided regular opportunities to improve Living Skills such as cooking. There was a weekly Sport Program and the SHINE Program was offered for girls which promotes individuality, sense of purpose and self-worth.

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

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM IN LITERACY AND NUMERACY

At the time of the 2012 National Assessment Program in Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) assessments The John Berne School did not have a Year 7 cohort. Therefore, all the results recorded below for 2012, are for the Year 9 cohort only.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2012		<i>% of students in the top 2 bands</i>		<i>% of students in the bottom 2 bands</i>	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 9	Reading	0%	19%	53%	25%
	Writing	0%	17%	67%	38%
	Spelling	0%	21%	53%	25%
	Grammar & Punctuation	0%	19%	73%	27%
	Numeracy	0%	23%	64%	23%

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 with the school.

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, Grammar and Punctuation, and to some extent Reading, has risen from 2008 to 2012. We believe this is the result of the intensive programs at the school. Intensive reading programs are decreasing the number 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 shows the percentages of students who achieved particular skill bands in numeracy and aspects of literacy. The school results shown are compared with students nationally. Literacy is reported in four content strands: Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Numeracy is reported in a single content strand.

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

In 2012, Pete's Place did not have any students who participated in NAPLAN testing.

Year 10 Results

Three students completed their Record of School Achievement at the end of 2012. One student completed a Record of School Achievement (Life Skills) in English and Mathematics. For issues of confidentiality, their results are not identified in this report.

SECTION EIGHT: 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 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.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The John Berne School adopts a whole school approach to anti-bullying. A staff consultation process resulted in the re-writing 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 2013 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 or from our website www.johnberneschool.org.

PASTORAL CARE AND WELLBEING – PETE’S PLACE SCHOOL

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.

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

INITIATIVES PROMOTING RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

As a Marist School we embody the values that Marcellin Champagnat lived every day. His greatest aspiration was that we relate to each other in our communities as members of a loving family would. At the core of our Berne family are the values of love, respect and responsibility, as is what Marcellin demonstrated for us to follow. As the adults of the community, the staff is encouraged to constantly model to the students the very essence of these values in all our interactions

Although bullying has never been condoned at Berne, a more formalised program has been established over the last 12 months. This program is very much centred on the values of Respect and Responsibility and was introduced to our students at the beginning of 2013. The main aim of the program is to help promote respect amongst students so that the incidence of bullying is, we would hope, eliminated. This is achieved through encouraging students to participate more positively in group activities at recess and lunch. During this time teachers will be promoting positive participation in team activities such as touch football, tennis and handball as well as board and card games. Teachers will exemplify to the students the positive approach that would be expected of each of them through encouragement and reward. 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 very aware of the processes that would then be put in place.

At Berne we accept that conflict is an inevitable part of life but what is integral to our programme is the way we guide our students in dealing with the conflict that occurs in their life. Restorative Justice has been an ongoing practice at Berne and is central to guiding our students in understanding the role of respect and responsibility in their relationships with others. This process not only allows the student to take responsibility for their own part in the conflict that has occurred but also exemplifies the importance of respect in being able to resolve the conflict. Through each part of this process students are counselled so as they not only feel supported but that they are aware of what it is they are doing. Effective communication is vital to this process and thus it is clearly explained to students that the aim of this process is to restore their place within the community and restore the relationship that has been affected. Resolution of the conflict is therefore encouraged and hopefully a more positive relationship established. Students are made aware that they have a responsibility not only to themselves but also to the community to repair the relationship that has broken down. It is hoped that through this process the value of respect is intrinsically acquired and our history shows that this certainly is the case.

The Behaviour Unit was developed to give extra support to those of our students who are struggling to participate in our programme. Restorative Justice is very much an integral part of the philosophy of the unit with the aim to restore students back to the community by helping them to take responsibility for their behaviours. Initial entry to the unit involves completing the “Making it Right” worksheet which is based on the Restorative Justice Focus questions. This worksheet directly encourages the student to take responsibility for their behaviours and to also take responsibility for restoring their place in the community as well. A significant aspect of the worksheet is asking the students to reflect on not only on who was affected as part of their conflict or issue but also to reflect on how they were affected as well. Thus by asking the students to walk in someone else’s shoes, it encourages not only understanding but increasing responsibility for their actions in relation to the way it impacts on others.

INITIATIVES PROMOTING RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY – PETE’S PLACE SCHOOL

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 and shared meals facilitate a broader range of interactions where respect and responsibility shown by students can be improved. Participation in programs within and beyond the school such as the Global Skills Employment Preparation workshops 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.

SECTION NINE: SCHOOL REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT

KEY IMPROVEMENTS ACHIEVED IN 2012

The Regional Council of Marist Schools Australia initiated a whole school review which was conducted during 2012 by an external expert panel involving consultation with various stakeholders. This review was part of the cyclical review process and a report was tabled with the Regional Coordinator of Marist Schools Australia.

One of the recommendations of the review was to employ an executive assistant to the School Principal with special responsibility for school promotion and fundraising which was enacted in Term 4. Another key recommendation was to investigate different models of operation for a special school of this nature. This resulted in a research project which commenced this year and will continue throughout 2013.

During 2012 programming was implemented for Years 7 and 8 students (Stage 4) which focussed on a project based learning delivery. Learning areas were integrated into a common content topic which meets outcomes across the curriculum and engage students in a holistic manner. Programs were collaboratively designed to encompass a variety of knowledge and skills based tasks.

Under the auspices of the Sydney Diocese Catholic Education Office, Registered Training Organisation (RTO), The John Berne School commenced delivering a Vocational Education and Training (VET) course to Year 9 and 10 students. The competencies of the Certificate I in Business course closely reflect many of the learning outcomes of the NSW Board of Studies Work Education subject, and the School is now proud to be one of only two schools in the Sydney Diocese facilitating a Stage 5 VET course. This research based approach to expanding course offerings for our students will see them better placed as graduates, to embark on their careers as life long learners.

PRIORITY KEY IMPROVEMENTS FOR 2013

A new strategic planning process was undertaken during the year to chart a new course for the next three years. This was completed with the assistance of an external facilitator. In addition an annual plan was also devised. The plan will be evaluated at the end of each year. Staff members have been charged with the responsibility to take different components forward in small groups commencing in 2013 and beyond.

The School will aim to continue to enhance the procedures for compiling effective Individual Education Plans for all students during 2013 and research will be conducted to select and implement appropriate programs for use in a special school setting to enhance our student's numeracy skills.

SCHOOL REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT – PETE'S PLACE SCHOOL

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2012

- Implementation of teaching programs from The John Berne School for the subjects of English, Mathematics, History, Geography, Science and PDHPE
- Students from all year groups completed a range of assessment tasks for each of these subjects
- Students aged 16 and older participated in a pilot program – a joint initiative with Global Skills Employment Service on *Employment Preparation Training*
- The SHINE program ran each term allowing all female students to participate as part of a small group
- PE practical lessons were facilitated twice a week enabling each student to participate once a week
- Staff training in the use of Apple Mac technology enabled them to expand the use of technology in achieving learning outcomes with students
- Training of staff to deliver ACE (Adolescents Coping with Emotions) so that this program can be facilitated for students in 2013

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 work towards students from Years 7 – 9 completing assessment tasks for each subject
- To utilise teaching programs from The John Berne School and ensure the completion of registers and evaluations
- To continue to seek and establish links to various community service providers, especially in the areas of employment preparation and mental health support
- To participate in a pilot program for Employment Preparation with Global Skills DES
- To increase the use of technology in learning activities
- To participate in Professional Development opportunities as part of The John Berne School community
- To participate in external Professional Development opportunities particularly relevant for working with students who have complex needs

SECTION TEN: 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.

At the end of each school year, parents, caregivers and students are invited to provide formal 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. This is done via a written survey and is forwarded on two separate occasions.

Results from the 2012 survey indicate that parents, caregivers and students were all 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 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 the students' experience at Berne.

This survey is then followed up with 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 2013, these phone calls were made during week 2 of Term 1, with 92% of past families participating in this survey round.

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.

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.

A whole school review conducted by external professionals focussed on interviews and discussions with a number of staff members. These gave the staff an opportunity to provide direct feedback on the school, its programs and its effectiveness. The external facilitators indicated a high level of satisfaction amongst the staff in regard to the school and its programs. They especially indicated their satisfaction with the input they have into the school and its development. There is a strong connection between the staff and the ethos of the school. It was pleasing to hear the feedback about the outstanding correlation between what the school says in its ethos and philosophy and what it actually does.

The school staff also had the opportunity to be involved in a listening activity which led to the development of the strategic plan for the next three years. This listening activity also revealed a high level of satisfaction amongst the staff about the school.

PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION – PETE’S PLACE SCHOOL

Parents reported at the end of 2012 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. 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. They also highlighted that the smaller student numbers made it easier for their child to succeed.

Teacher satisfaction at Pete’s Place 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 gains enormous satisfaction from the outcomes achieved by our students, whether they are behavioural, social or academic. The complex needs of the young people who attend Pete’s Place 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 2012, 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. Some students stated they had never liked school before but enjoy attending Pete’s Place, saying they could now be excited about their future. 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 were treated fairly.

SECTION ELEVEN: 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 2012

<u>REVENUE</u>	\$
Fees – Tuition	100,469
Fees – Others	20,256
	<hr/> 120,725
Interest	2,895
State Govt Grants – General Recurrent	118,511
Commonwealth Govt Grants – General Recurrent	1,078,737
Community Grants	63,576
Special Education & Special Disabilities	2,000
Building Grant Province	13,470 300,000
Tuckshop (Deficit)	(11,491)
Donations	21,218
Fundraising	91,391
Profit on Disposal of Non Current Assets	-
Bad Debts Recovered	1,065
Other Income	801
	<hr/>
<u>TOTAL REVENUE</u>	1,802,898
<u>LESS EXPENDITURE</u>	
Tuition Expenses and Materials	1,649,678
Administration and General Running Costs	207,460
	<hr/>
<u>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</u>	1,857,138
	<hr/>
<u>(DEFICIT) FOR THE PERIOD</u>	(54,240)

FINANCIAL STATEMENT – PETE’S PLACE SCHOOL

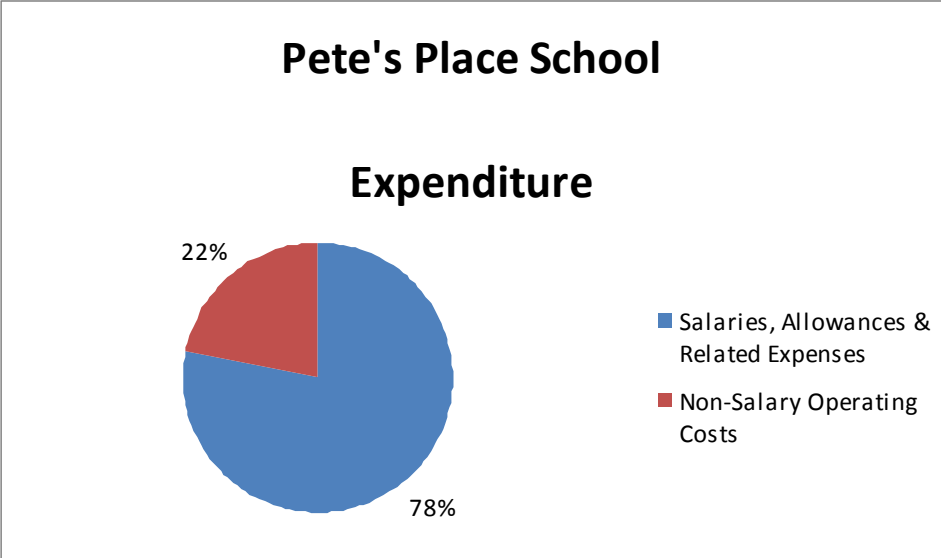
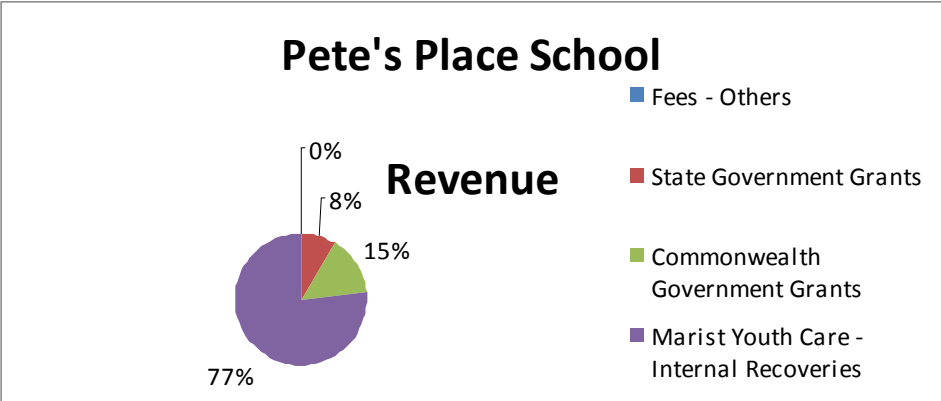
Summary Financial Information to December 2012

REVENUE

Fees - Others	600
State Government Grants	34,210
Commonwealth Government Grants	59,928
Marist Youth Care - Internal Recoveries	311,835
Total Revenue	406,573

EXPENDITURE

Salaries, Allowances & Related Expenses	317,166
Non-Salary Operating Costs	89,407
 Total Expenditure	 406,573
Surplus/Deficit for Period	0



SUPPORTERS OF THE JOHN BERNE SCHOOL

The John Berne School would like to express thanks for the support we received during the year from organisations and individuals in the wider community including: Ashfield RSL Club; Bullant Sports; Canterbury Bulldogs / Lakemba Services Club; Catholic Education Office Sydney; C.I.R. Property Maintenance; Coca Cola Amatil Pty Ltd; Club Ashfield; Club Burwood; Cooley Auctions; Ex-Marist Mothers' Association; Flexi Commercial; Former Members Association; Fugen Constructions; Illawarra Catholic Club; Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club; PaKay Pty Ltd; Marrickville Council; St Joseph's College Hunters Hill; St Thomas Becket Parish Lewisham; St Francis Xavier's College Hamilton; 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; 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 2012.

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.