



## Dear parents, caregivers, and friends of Berne

It is with much pleasure that I write this Principal's foreword for the first newsletter of the year. While I do not officially begin at the school for a couple of weeks I was here for the staff days and was also fortunate to meet the students on their first day. It seems the holiday break was much appreciated by students and staff.

It is an honour and privilege to be appointed to lead The John Berne School. I am looking forward to it. I am fully aware that I am the first lay person to hold this role. I am grateful for the dedicated efforts of Brother Mark Paul and thank him for his work for the students and for the school.

I have been warmly welcomed by staff and I appreciate the efforts they have made to prepare for the year ahead to ensure it is a successful one for the students and for our school. Their dedication to caring for and teaching the students is exemplary. I look forward to working with them and being guided by their example and passion.

At the first assembly of the year held on the first morning I was able to welcome the students and took the opportunity to make a few simple points.

The first point was that we who all belong to Berne: students, parents, carers, staff and friends form the Berne community. In fact as a Marist school we are more a family than just a group of separate souls gathered under the umbrella that is our school. As such, each of us has the responsibility of contributing to making things go well. I know we can each do this. Families are complex and mostly imperfect but with our hearts and minds aligned we can make this family of Berne a positive experience for all. The second point is that it's a new year and so we have the chance to unburden ourselves of excess unwanted personal baggage and take up habits and attitudes which are life giving and positive.

I love the school motto, Hope Always. The virtue of hope is one which Christians, Catholics, Marists and indeed all peoples need for a fulfilling life. In my last school the virtue of faith was prominent and

like hope and love it is central to creating a good world. On one of the staff days the staff spent time reflecting on the topic of hope, but with a difference. We focused on the theme of "audacious hope". Why the extra word you may ask. Well I believe that word makes a significant difference. It's one thing to hope for a better future or a better society or a better set of circumstances but it's another to be audacious in what we hope for. It takes courage to be daring and take the risk of thinking beyond the and everyday. That's what audacity is: thinking big and having the courage to hope for better and, more importantly, matching the hope with personal effort to realise those hopes.

In the year ahead may we each be people of daring and audacity. With the Lord's continued guidance and example we can each do great things and achieve our personal hopes and aspirations.

Jesus gives us the most beautiful example of the kind of hope and freedom He wants for every person through the story of healing the woman bent over (Luke 13:10-17). We don't know her name. Over eighteen years she had been bent over and the only thing she could see was the ground and dirt and dust at her feet. Then she encountered Jesus. He called her and with a gentle word and simple touch she was immediately cured. From that point on she straightened up. She could see others and see around her. The shape of her previous crippled body was symbolic of those things that stunt or distort our lives: fear, ignorance, prejudice, discrimination. She was now set free of those and began another way of seeing the world. She could now look to the future; one full of possibility and promise. This is an example of Christian hope, one relevant to each of us and not only the woman in the gospel; if we open ourselves to Christ and to believing, all is possible.

My sincere best wishes to each of you for the year ahead. May St Marcellin continue to watch over us and guide us in our efforts.

Mr Richard Sidorko  
Principal

## Issue 1 2018

### Upcoming Events

#### 28 February–2 March

Year 7 and 8 activities and excursions

#### 5–9 March

Year 10 work experience

#### 7–9 March

Year 9 camp

#### 16 March

Year 7 and 8 excursion

#### 19–21 March

Year 10 camp

#### 19–23 March

Year 9 work experience

#### 29 March

Stations of the Cross at Mittagong

#### 30 March

Good Friday

#### 2 April

Easter Monday

#### 6 April

Year 7 and 8 excursion

#### 13 April

Students' last day Term 1

#### 1 May

Students' first day Term 2

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## Berne Development Office

A warm welcome back to Ange Flannery and Catherine Williams! The staff and supporters of The John Berne School are pleased Ange and Catherine have decided to return and wish them all the success and support they need to ensure the Berne Luncheon and other fundraising events are a great success.

— James Le Huray, Acting Principal

## Parent Staff Night

On Monday 12th February the first of four parent staff nights was held at The John Berne School. It was wonderful to have the majority of parents and carers present and have the opportunity to discuss the strategic directions of the school, your involvement in these as well as the significant events of the year.

Parents had the opportunity to meet in year groups and were informed of the processes we have in place in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy, the 'Tuning into Teens' program and their child's Personal Plan emphasising the importance of their engagement in supporting the learning of their child.

Thank you to all staff and parents who were present. It was a lovely evening and we look forward to meeting with parents and carers once again in Term 2 on Monday 21st May for the second parent staff night.

— James Le Huray, Acting Principal

## Ash Wednesday

The whole school gathered in the Champagnat room at roll call on Ash Wednesday. After an opening prayer; why ash, why Wednesday, why a cross and why Lent were explained. The significance of Lent was introduced with a reading from the gospel of Matthew which ended with "just as it did it to one of the least of these people".



Following, was a reflection from Pope Francis who suggested we become more like Jesus by fasting from "criticism of others", "being anxious", "being jealous", and "from holding grudges". Then a pause to consider. Finally, the group moved quietly to their roll call classes for the distribution of the ashes and a final prayer which asked for a blessing on their efforts to turn away from the dark side and become more like Jesus.

— Br Chris Hogan

## Inner West Regional Mass

The John Berne School was well represented at the Inner West Regional Mass at St Brigid's Catholic Church Marrickville on Tuesday 13th February. The Mass has become an important tradition as our school communities gather to pray for God's blessings on our work for the new school year and to welcome our teachers who have recently commenced their first year of service. Most Reverend Anthony Fisher OP was the principal celebrant at the Mass, which was concelebrated with priests of the region.

Thank you to all staff who attended this event.

— James Le Huray, Acting Principal

## Work Experience — What's the Deal?

Year 9 and 10 students participate in at least one week's work experience each term. This is an integral part of the school program designed to ensure that students leave the school with the socialisation, knowledge,

confidence, experience and skills necessary to contribute to the workforce and negotiate the next phase of their lives.

It is a compulsory part of the program and students are supported through the process of identifying areas of interest, locating and negotiating with potential employers and completing the work experience with appropriate monitoring by the school.

The work experience dates this term are:

Year 10 — Monday 5th to Friday 9th March

Year 9 — Monday 19th to Friday 23rd March

Parent interest in helping students locate suitable placements is both invited and welcome. All students have been provided with a set of forms to be completed by prospective employers and further copies can be obtained from school.

— Michael Muranty, Work Experience Coordinator

## School Absences

Parents and carers please note that if your child is away from school for any reason please telephone the school office on 9560 9260 or email [office@johnberneschool.org](mailto:office@johnberneschool.org) before 8.30am on the morning of their absence. If the office is unattended at the time of your call, please leave a message. On the day your child returns to school, please also send in an explanatory note. A medical certificate is required for absences due to sickness of two days or more. Any absence without written explanation will be noted as unexplained on your child's report.

In the event of a student requiring leave for part of a day please notify the school in writing as soon as possible beforehand.

On occasions where extended leave is sought (more than part of a day) a parent or carer must apply in writing to the Principal. This application should clearly state the reasons for such leave and needs to establish that all reasonable alternative arrangements regarding the student's class responsibilities will be met. It is imperative that such requests be forwarded to the Principal well in advance; at least two weeks before the intended leave. While we understand that on rare occasions emergencies and other unforeseen circumstances call for leave at short notice, we require written notification as soon as practicable.

## Berne needs your support! ASX Art Union Raffle

The John Berne School stands to receive a donation of up to \$50,000 from the ASX Thomson Reuters Charity Foundation in support of our vital Counselling Program.

As one of the Foundation's chosen charities to support in 2018, Berne is asked to sell a large number of Art Union Raffle tickets which will help raise some of the donation money. The donation amount Berne receives will be determined by how many tickets are sold.

We would love your help in selling as many raffle tickets as possible. There are some fantastic prizes to be won, click here ([winasx.com/12](http://winasx.com/12)) to view prizes and to purchase tickets.

## Central Australia Immersion 2018

We are very privileged to have the opportunity to offer our students an immersion experience in Central Australia in Term 4 from the 4th to the 11th November. This is our third year visiting the community of Santa Teresa which is 85km southeast of Alice Springs, Northern Territory.

In order to offer our staff and students this opportunity we engage in fundraising activities and events such as a trivia night, cake stalls at the local parish and special food items on sale at the school canteen. These initiatives will commence this term so we have plenty of time to raise the necessary funds for each participant to attend the immersion.



During their immersion our students will spend time visiting and helping the Ltyentye Apurte Catholic Education Centre in Santa Teresa. We are also collecting Coles Sports for Schools vouchers for this school so we are asking all our friends to save their vouchers for us to send to them. If you can help us with this please bring your vouchers to the Berne office.

— Nicole Arathoon, Year 10 Coordinator

## Visit From Past Student

Matthew Giusa graduated from Berne in 2016. He recently returned to visit us and complete a day of community engagement helping in classes with our students.



Matthew and Daniel playing pool in La Valla

Matthew is in Year 12 at Southern Cross Catholic Vocational College where he is undertaking a school based apprenticeship in carpentry. A fine role model for our students, we congratulate him on all his achievements and hope he will come back to visit again soon.

## Drumbeat

We are very lucky to have Sally Riley from Catholic Care Lewisham once again delivering the DRUMBEAT program to Year 10.

Holyoake's DRUMBEAT program is the world's first structured learning program using music (drums), psychology and neurobiology to reconnect with ourselves and others. The name DRUMBEAT is an acronym for Discovering Relationships Using Music, Beliefs, Emotions, Attitudes, and Thoughts.



Gemma, Nicole, Sally, David, and Kristina bringing the house down

Each DRUMBEAT session uses the drum and focuses on different relationship themes such as identity and social responsibility, values, dealing with emotions, peer pressure, harmony, communication and teamwork. This program forms part of our anti-bullying initiative at the school by increasing social skills and awareness of others. The program will run for seven weeks and will end with a final performance.

— Phoebe Mitsak, Counsellor

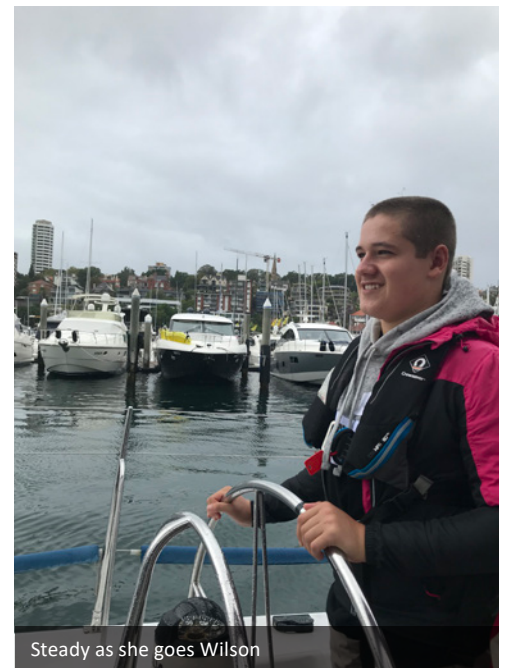
## Year 9 Sailing Adventure

Students were anxious as the rain fell and the wind blew hard on Monday morning. Everyone was wondering if the sailing excursion would go ahead? The call was made and the green light given! Year 9 boarded the bus and made their way to Rushcutters Bay, where they had the amazing opportunity to experience what it is like to be on board and assist the sailing of a world class, racing yacht.



Harry and Patrick getting ready for their turn at the helm

The charity Sailors with disABILITIES has a long affiliation with The John Berne School; well over 15 years. Students are guided through an eight week course where experienced volunteers teach the students how to work as a unit to physically take control and sail around Sydney harbour. As the students' skills and confidence grow there are opportunities to captain the yacht out through the heads!



Steady as she goes Wilson

Year 9 should be commended on their outstanding participation, positive attitude and the respect they displayed while on the excursion. We hope that we are invited back to complete the full sailing program. Many thanks to David Pescud and Sailors with disABILITIES for this opportunity.

— David Riddington, Teacher

## Thank you

The John Berne School gratefully acknowledges the generosity of Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club for their grant towards our Breakfast Program. We thank you for this support which is greatly appreciated by our whole school community.



## Aikido Program

This term Year 9 has been participating in the challenging Aikido program run by Darren Friend at his Marrickville dojo. Aikido is a Japanese martial art that challenges participants both physically and mentally with students working on drills and skills that could help resolve a conflict situation.



Darren helping Nik and Wilson with their technique

Over the past few weeks students have worked hard on their balance, coordination, reaction, and sense of timing; posture, flexibility and how to be a more relaxed individual. Over the coming weeks under the guidance of Darren we also look forward to students working together to develop greater self-confidence and self-discipline.



Our sincere thanks to Wests Ashfield for their ClubGRANTS sponsorship to enable our students to participate in this valuable program.

— Anthony Rooskie, Year 9 Coordinator

## Welcome New Students

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to new students who recently joined our school: Daniel in Year 10, Ben and Jarrod in Year 9 and Dylan, Jordan in Year 8.

## Year 9 Science

As part of the human body unit, Year 9 students recently dissected sheep brains in order to examine the structure of the brain.



After some initial fear and disgust at seeing the brains on the outside of the skull, students were able to identify the key brain structures including the various lobes and cerebellum. It was a fantastic way to take the learning from the classroom and explore this fascinating organ.

— Anthony Rooskie, Year 9 Coordinator

## Bringing Valuables to School

We ask that students not bring any valuable items including cash (more than \$10) to school as we cannot take responsibility for any loss. We encourage you to call the front office to organise EFT payments for excursions and camps and to add funds to your child's canteen account.

In the rare cases where it is unavoidable please let us know and we will work out a suitable arrangement.

## Save The Date For The Annual Berne Luncheon

Date: Friday 22 June

Time: 12noon–3:30pm

Where: Doltone House, Hyde Park, 3/181 Elizabeth Street Sydney

Dress: Lounge Suit

We hope to see as many of you there as possible for a fun afternoon of good food, meeting new people, and supporting the school.

# PARENTS' CORNER

## What is Social and Emotional Learning?

The following is an excerpt from the KidsMatter website.

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is about learning how to manage feelings, manage friendships and solve problems. These are essential life skills that support a child's ability to cope with difficulties and helps prevent mental health problems.

Children who develop social and emotional skills find it easier to manage themselves, relate to others, resolve conflict, and feel positive about themselves and the world around them. It's important to recognise that social and emotional skills develop over time, and that they may develop differently for different children.

Research has found that teaching children social and emotional skills at school as well as at home makes a positive difference to their wellbeing. Social and emotional skills help school children settle in the classroom and get on with learning.

When children are taught specific strategies for recognising and responding to emotions, thinking through challenging situations and communicating effectively, they are less likely to act out frustrations at school and elsewhere.

Parents and carers have a critical role to play in guiding and supporting children's social and emotional learning. Social and emotional skills develop with practice. Everyday situations present lots of opportunities for children to learn and practise skills for coping with emotions, managing relationships and solving problems.

<https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/mental-health-matters/belonging>

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