



Dear parents, carers, and friends of Berne

This newsletter is being compiled as the end of Term 3 approaches. Like most terms at our school the term has been filled with a variety of activities for our students. Those that come quickly to mind include the increase in enrolments to 34 at the August census (including now five girls), the launch of our school values (written about in the previous newsletter), the Year 7 & 8 activity days and the additional staff professional learning day which saw our teachers continue to explore creative ways of extending our learning and teaching program.

During the year the staff has spent considerable time focusing on renewing the overall program that Berne offers. What we do and how we do it is certainly effective but like any dynamic organisation its important to focus on improvement and renewal. I believe we are approaching this work in a collaborative, energetic and enthusiastic way. At the Term 4 parent/carers/teacher interviews you will be invited to give us your suggestions and feedback through the survey instrument we will provide. The students too will have the same opportunity. I thank you in advance for your participation in this important process.

An article in a recent Sydney Morning Herald discussed "The Six Types of Teenage Spirituality in Australia" (SMH 18/9/28). I found the article interesting as it confirmed for me what I suspected to be the case with young people and their views of religion. According to the article a new national survey found that at least half of teens say they are "religious nones"; that is they don't identify with any religion. In looking further the research found that while most GenZ teens have little to do with organised religion a large number are still interested in different ways of expressing their spirituality.

The six types of spirituality which were identified are: This-worldly; Religiously committed; Seekers; Spiritual but not religious; Indifferent and Nominally religious.

The article ended by making the points

that there is a lot of diversity amongst teens on the matter of faith and spirituality, that teens are open to diversity in others and that as a whole they are not anti-religious. These conclusions fit neatly with what I've come to learn about young people after years of teaching. While many adults want to impose their own faith and religiosity on to their children, the reality is that can be counter productive. Faith is a gift from God and the Holy Spirit works in unpredictable ways, especially when it comes to a person's faith journey.

In keeping with this year's theme at Berne "an audacious hope" let us always remain hopeful that each of our students will find their way in their faith journey and become good, decent people who make a difference through the way they live their lives.

Hope Always.

Richard Sidorko
Principal

Issue 6 2018

Upcoming Events

28 September
Students' last day Term 3

16 October
Students' first day Term 4

25 October
John Berne day Mass

1 November
All Saints Day

2 November
All Souls Day

4–11 November
Santa Teresa Immersion

12 November
Parent/Carer/Teacher interviews

14–16 November
Years 7 & 8 Camp

22–28 November
Year 10 Work Experience

26–30 November
Year 9 Work Experience

6 December
Picnic day

7 December
Students' last day Term 4

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Changing Lanes Program

We are delighted that so many of our past students regularly return to our school for a friendly visit to catch up with staff and we always appreciate hearing how they are going. Vince, a student who graduated from Year 10 at Berne in 2016, and Lachlan, who graduated in 2015 recently called in to see us. Vince took the opportunity to visit before he started a new landscaping job and Lachlan is continuing his studies in music at TAFE. Both were impressed with the refurbishments to our school buildings since they were here.

Each year we also receive calls for help and visits from past students who need assistance with job seeking or in finding suitable post school education or training options. Others need help with additional tutorial support. Often too, our school counsellors are asked to provide counselling services for past students and their families. Berne's Changing Lanes Program provides support for our past students who need additional assistance after leaving school. Our thanks to Campsie RSL Club for a grant providing financial support for our Changing Lanes Program this year.

— *Michael Muranty, Work Experience Coordinator*

New Volunteers

It is my pleasure to introduce four new volunteers who have joined our school community this term. Joseph Boyce volunteers on Thursdays supporting our staff and students in the Support Unit, with his patience and gentle guidance he is a wonderful asset to the team.

We also welcome two Australian Catholic University students studying a Bachelor of Education, Bede Curran and Stephina Lunardi who volunteer on Mondays and work side by side staff and students in classes. Both are proving to be passionate and enthusiastic about working with young people and helping them succeed in the classroom.

We have also been blessed with another Australian Catholic University student, Supi Taufa'ao who is in his second year of a Bachelor of Social Work degree. He comes to us from Marist Youth Ministry where he has been the Regional Assistant for three years. Supi will be working with staff and students four days per week until the end of the year and we couldn't be happier with the wonderful impact he is already having on our community with his cheerful disposition and humble manner.

We also very happily welcomed back who makes a lovely breakfast with our students each Tuesday morning which is then shared with the school community. Of course, we

continue to appreciate the time and efforts of our marvellous long standing volunteers: John Cowen, Patricia Robinson, Wendy Ballesty, Louise Watts and Darren Friend.

— *Nicole Arathoon, Volunteers Coordinator*

Farewell Gemma and Melissa

Berne students and staff gathered together for a morning tea to farewell school psychologist, Gemma Peters and teacher Melissa Painter who are leaving us at the end of Term 3 for maternity leave. We send with them our love and best wishes for the birth of their babies and look forward to seeing them again soon when they come back.

— *Mr Richard Sidorko, Principal*



Blue Gum Walk

Recently the Year 7 & 8 students had the opportunity to explore the Blue Gum bush walk in Hornsby. The dominant tree in this area is the Sydney Blue Gum, hence the name of our walk. As we walked around the students noted that some trees have a smooth slate-gray bark and others rough brown bark. This is known as the 'sock' and protects the tree until it is ready to shed the bark.



These beautiful trees form an extremely rare ecological community known as the Blue Gum Diatreme Forest. On our walk we learned that only about 14 hectares of this forest remains and it occurs here because of the deep clay soil, produced by the weathering of the volcanic rock of the Hornsby Diatreme.

Due to time restrictions we only ventured to the Fishponds and back. The Fishponds

are a series of waterholes on the Berowa Creek where we spotted a huge carp. Students pointed out that this was an invasive species and that we should have brought our fishing rods to catch it. After working up an appetite we found a few picnic tables and enjoyed some healthy chicken wraps before returning to school.

— *Tanja Dunne, Year 7 & 8 Coordinator*

Significant Events for Australian Marists

The John Berne School is part of the Marist world. There are two important and significant events for Marists in Australia that will happen in September and October 2018.

The Marist Association of St Marcellin Champagnat has an assembly in Adelaide, 2nd — 4th October. This Association is a group of people who are inspired by St Marcellin Champagnat and wish to continue his vision of making Jesus known and loved in the way of Mary by bringing hope to the youth of today. During the three days the participants will "dialogue, pray and discern" together the things that are most critical to bring viability and vitality to Marist Mission.

The Marist Brothers of the Province of Australia have a chapter at Mittagong, 23rd — 26th September. The brothers of the Australian province elect delegates who meet to frame the next few years for the lives of the brothers in this part of the Marist world. This coincides with the new tenure of the brother in charge, called the Provincial. These delegates elect a council to advise him in his work of leading the brothers.

— *Br Chris Hogan*

Medication at School

When a medical practitioner has prescribed medication for your child that needs to be administered during the school day parents and carers must:

- notify the school in writing indicating dosage, timing and other instructions
- provide the school with written authority to administer the medication
- supply the medication to the school office in the packaging in which it was dispensed
- notify the school office immediately of any changes

Year 7 & 8 Activities

Year 7 & 8 students this term had the opportunity to engage in different activities over the course of three days.

For our first activity on Wednesday we headed over to the Ryde Aquatic Center. Here the students floated around the lazy river enjoying the warm water and simply relaxing. Their swimming and diving skills were put to the test in the 25m pool before enjoying a lunch in the sunshine outside. Madison and myself decided to do a few laps of the pool before deciding that the lazy river was just more fun. Jack, Connor and Michael demonstrated the correct form for the most effective cannonball from the diving boards.



The lazy river at Ryde Aquatic Centre

On Thursday the group went to Tree Top Adventure Park in Grose River. After a safety induction and ensuring all the students and staff were deemed ready for the various ropes courses. It was wonderful to see the students supporting each other with positive encouragement.



Everyone paying full attention at the safety induction

Anthony volunteered to go first across an obstacle and then waited for Max to make it across helping him with advice on how to best do so. All the students completed two green courses and moved on to the blue ones higher up

the trees. James, Connor, Jack and Victor also pushed themselves to complete an even more challenging red course.



Everyone's company made the film worth going to

For our final activity the group went to the movies at Burwood. The students selected the movie 'Searching' and all thought it was not everybody's cup of tea; most of them found parts of it enjoyable. After the movie we headed to the food court for lunch and then returned to school in time for dismissal. Congratulations to all the students for making activities week a great success.

— Tanja Dunne, Year 7 & 8 Coordinator

Berne Memorial Garden

Nestled under the shade of two beautiful gum trees, the Berne memorial garden is a special place for reflection, prayer and contemplation. For many of us, gardens provide a perfect space to sit and spend some time reflecting in solitude. Our memorial garden is also used as a meeting place for students and staff and as focus for prayer, especially to remember loved ones.



The new memorial garden

This new circular garden was created when our school was renovated with extensive new landscaping last year. The center of the garden includes roses and memorial plaques from Berne's original garden. The photo below taken in 2003 shows students and staff gathered around this garden after planting a rose in tribute to student's grandmother who passed away that year.

One of the plaques in the garden is in memory of David Hordern who taught at Berne from 2000 to 2005. Dave was a dedicated and greatly admired teacher, careers adviser and outdoor education expert. Other plaques are

in remembrance of previous Berne students who have passed away.

— Sandra Scott, School Administrator

Year 7 & 8 History Excursion

As part of the History curriculum Year 7 & 8 students had the opportunity to explore the Chinese Gardens of Friendship in Darling Harbour. The gardens were designed in China and presented to Sydney as a gift from its sister city, Guangdong, to celebrate the Australian Bicentenary.

As we entered the garden there was a definite change in atmosphere and mood from the busy streets of Darling Harbour. As we wandered around the beautiful water features and ponds featuring Koi carp students began noticing Chinese horoscope signs around the garden. We searched the garden for various horoscopes finding out about each of the different signs.



Enjoying the day out at the Chinese Gardens

After an hour of exploring the gardens we headed off to a very busy yum cha restaurant. Students and staff ordered various things from the carts and showed their more adventurous side by trying new things. After enjoying a delicious lunch we walked back to Central station and headed back to school. Thank you to all the students for their wonderful behaviour throughout the day.

— David Stevens, Teacher

Thank you Club Central Hurstville

The John Berne School gratefully acknowledges the generosity of Illawarra Catholic Club, Club Central Hurstville for their grants in support of our Breakfast and Outdoor Education Programs this year. We sincerely thank them for this support which is greatly appreciated by our whole school community.



Year 9 Bronte to Coogee Walk

Last Friday Year 9 staff and students took advantage of the spring weather to walk along the coast from Bronte to Coogee. We chose a very short stroll for our first spring activity as no one trained during the off season and fitness was lacking.



Picnic at Coogee beach

Despite this everyone made the journey without incident nor was it overly taxing. This allowed us to take in the natural beauty of the surrounds and was a reminder of how fortunate we are to be blessed with such a beautiful city to live in.



"Whoa look at that combination of the built and natural environments! Too much erosion; Dave would love this. Quick Dom take a photo!" — Ben

Ben and Wilson admired the patience of nature in the erosion that was evident in the sandstone cliffs while Harry and Noah spotted wildlife including a sea hawk which was perched on a lamp post.

A lovely picnic lunch was shared on the lawn at Coogee beach and we are grateful to David for preparing it.

Well done to all the participants for a lovely day out.

— Anthony Rooskie, Year 9 Coordinator

Work Experience Report

During Week 8 students from Years 9 and 10 undertook a variety of work experiences with some pleasing successes. Students worked in a variety of industries including printing, hospitality, automotive, hair and beauty, landscaping and gardening, retail and plumbing, just to name a few.



David at Concord Sports

Special thanks to our volunteer, Darren Friend, who spent many hours with students making phone calls to prospective employers and negotiating placements. This is one of the more difficult tasks associated with work experience and is greatly appreciated.

Years 9 and 10 students have one more week of work experience to complete during Term 4. The dates are as follows:

Year 9 — Monday 26th November to Friday 30th November

Year 10 — Thursday 22nd November to Wednesday 28th November

— Michael Muranty, Work Experience Coordinator

Santa Teresa Immersion Fundraiser Trivia Night

A trivia night fundraiser will be held at the school to raise money for the delegation going to Santa Teresa on our annual immersion. Come and join us for a night of fun and games. Please note that this is an 18+ only event.

Friday 19th October 6.30pm

BYO Food and drinks

\$25 per head

**St Thomas Beckett
Primary School Hall**

5 Thomas St Lewisham

Lots of prizes to be won!

PARENTS' CORNER

It's Not OK To Be Away Nor Late To School

When kids miss school, not only is their academic progress impeded, forcing them to catch up on missed work (which some never do), they often miss important interactions with their peers which can compound issues of social isolation and low self-esteem.

One of the most important things you can do to ensure your child has a bright future is to make sure he or she goes to school every day—and gets there on time.

It sounds simple, but it's true. The correlation between school attendance and children's achievement levels is well established. The more time kids spend at school, the more likely they are to experience school success.

Conversely, according to a report from the Victorian Auditor General, students who are regularly absent from school are at the greatest risk of dropping out of school early, and of experiencing long-term unemployment.

It's now commonplace for children to stay away from school for reasons that would have been unheard of just twenty years ago. These include staying away to celebrate their own or a sibling's birthday; being absent because they stayed up too late watching television; going shopping for clothes; an extended long weekend; and kids not wanting to take part in a sports day or special school event.

This type of absenteeism sends a strong message to kids that parents don't really value learning or their children's school experiences.

Excerpt from Michael Grose
www.parentingideas.com.au

Thomas Street Lewisham NSW 2049
Locked Bag 6 Petersham NSW 2049
T: 02 9560 9260
F: 02 9560 9290

office@johnberneschool.org
www.thejohnberneschool.org