



## Dear parents, carers, and friends of Berne

In this first newsletter for the year I want to reiterate the message of welcome which I made to all our families in the letter sent to you when school began. As I mentioned in that letter we have introduced a number of new initiatives into the timetable, particularly in our focus on learning and teaching. I'm pleased to report the school year has begun positively and there is a good tone in the school generally and in the classrooms more specifically. I am confident the changes we have introduced, which were explained at the recent information meeting, will contribute to good outcomes for our students.

Thank you to the many of you who attended the recent information meeting. This forum was an opportunity for you as parents and carers to connect with staff to focus on your son or daughter to ensure there is a united effort to work together for their benefit.

Amongst the changes we have initiated in 2019 is the Berne Teaching Cycle. This process is specifically focused on teachers working collaboratively with their peers to create personal goals for the year and then an action plan to achieve those goals. The emphasis is on staff continuing to learn and extend themselves professionally in the classroom and in the manner in which they care for the students.

Other exciting initiatives we have introduced include Project Based Learning; a creative and team based learning experience intended to be an alternative way of integrating subject areas and learning outcomes across the curriculum. Staff have also created extensive Living Skills programs for both Stage 4 and Stage 5 students as well as an Activities program. Both programs are intended to make learning relevant, practical and life oriented.

Each year we have a theme to focus on as we journey together as a Christian, Catholic, Marist community. Last year's theme centred on 'Hope'. In 2019 we will consider and reflect on the theme of 'Being Holy'. During our assemblies, liturgies and times of prayer we will reflect on this theme and on its meaning in our individual

lives and for us as a Berne community.

The call to be holy is made by Pope Francis. It's certainly a challenging task to take on. From my own perspective the concept of holiness describes those highly religious people who have an intimate relationship with God expressed in disciplines of prayer, good works and exceptional living out of the Gospel values. That's not me. I'm sure many of us 'ordinary' folk would say the same. In fact I try to do my best each day to be a good person, a good Christian, a good Catholic, a good Marist. But I fail often and am a long way from being 'holy'. It is particularly challenging I think to be holy in the highly secular materialistic society in which we live.

The following excerpt from the Marist documents may help make sense of how we each, in the ordinariness of our daily lives, can strive for holiness.

- Daily experiences are special places of encounter with God, we find God's presence in creation. In the events of every day work and relationships, silence and noise, joys and sorrows, achievements and anguish, tragedy and death.
- God is revealed to us through those we meet, young and old people, members of our families and communities, the refugee and prisoner, the sick person and the caregiver, our co-worker and our neighbour, all are mirrors reflecting the God of life and of love.
- We experience God also in the witness of people committed to peace, justice, and solidarity with the poor and those who act with generosity and self-sacrifice in the service of others.
- All the people and events of life offer an opportunity to encounter our merciful God. Perhaps we meet God most closely when we are vulnerable and hurting or when we stand by our word despite the cost to ourselves. When we give thanks for the gift of life, when we heal relationships, when

## Issue 1 2019

### Upcoming Events

#### 24 February

Fundraising BBQ at Bunnings Ashfield

#### 27 February–1 March

Stage 4 Activities

#### 6 March

Ash Wednesday Liturgy

#### 11–15 March

Stage 5 Camp

#### 25–29 March

Stage 5 Work Experience

#### 11 April

Stations of the Cross at Mittagong  
Students' last day Term 1

#### 12 April

Berne Annual Fundraising Luncheon  
Pupli Free Day

#### 30 April

Students' first day Term 2

### In This Issue

Principal's Address  
Welcome New Students  
Thank You Club Ashfield  
Suspension and Time Out  
Bunnings Ashfield Barbeque  
Big Book Brag  
Berne Gardens  
Work Experience  
Project Based Learning  
Living Skills  
The Importance of Sleep  
Staff News  
Stage 4 Coogee Excursion  
Parents' Corner

we offer and receive forgiveness, when we celebrate the eucharist and share the word — all can be moments of grace to meet and know God.

During 2019 may each of us in our own simple and everyday ways strive to be authentically good Christian people who make our world a better place and make Berne a better school to be part of. On the simplest of levels we can live out the call to be holy by being kind to each other and respecting the holiness that is within each of us.

Be assured of our strong commitment to realising the Berne mission as we work with our students and families in the year ahead.

Mr Richard Sidorko  
Principal



Mr Sidorko addresses parents at the parent information evening

## Welcome New Students

We would like to welcome new students who have joined our school this term. A very warm welcome to: Alex, Amelie, Theo and Tyra in Year 10 (Stage 5) and Dylan, Finn and Oliver in Year 8 (Stage 4).

## Thank you Club Ashfield

The John Berne School gratefully acknowledges the generosity of Club Ashfield for their continuing support of our school. We sincerely thank them for their donation of \$5,000 in support of our Skills for Living and Aikido Programs.



## Suspension and Time Out

A very warm welcome to all for 2019. I am aware Mr Sidorko sent a letter to all members of the Berne community outlining some changes to the delivery of the curriculum to the students. Aligning with the changes the staff have collaboratively discussed a more positive approach to managing the students at Berne. The hope for all students at Berne is for growth in their social and emotional behaviours and with the new changes the students will need to take responsibility for their actions, resolve the issue and move forward.

This year there will be no Support Unit and in its place will be the Time Out Room. The Time Out Room is a new upstairs classroom that takes advantage of the greater natural light and leafier outlook provided thanks to our recent refurbishments. It's for students to come to when they are having difficulty engaging in their learning. It also provides a supportive "circuit-breaker" environment for non-critical incidents. The Time Out Room helps students by giving them a supervised space for themselves for a short period, to seek help to lower their anxiety if necessary, and to reflect on what's not quite right. The Time Out Room will be permanently staffed. Teachers will refer students to the Time Out Room if they are disruptive in class, refusing to follow directions or for minor disciplinary matters that are impeding other students' learning. Students will only be in the Time Out Room for the remainder of the period and it is then expected students will have reflected on their behaviours and calmed down in an effort to return to class for the next period. Students who have been referred to the Time Out Room on more than two occasions during any given day will have a meeting with the Assistant Principal, Year Coordinator and, where possible, their school counsellor. A decision will be made at the meeting whether the student will need to go home, stay in the Time Out Room or return to class.

Students who have been suspended from the school will arrive back to school and meet with their counsellor to discuss the reason for suspension and prepare them, if necessary, for a Restorative Justice session. The Restorative Justice session will take place in the morning and the student will be in class once this has been completed successfully. It is possible the student may not be ready to accept responsibility for their actions and participate in the Restorative Justice session. If this is the case the student will be asked to go home and reflect on their actions and begin the process the following day.

I would like to thank you all in advance for your support of the school and the new changes as we are trying to ensure your son or daughter learns to accept

responsibility, resolve the issue or breakdown in relationship and importantly return to the classroom to further their learning as quickly as possible.

— James Le Huray, Assistant Principal

## Bunnings Ashfield Barbeque

On Sunday 24th February The John Berne School will run a fundraising barbeque at Bunnings Ashfield. The money raised will be used to help cover the cost of the school's Immersion to Santa Teresa, Alice Springs.

It would be greatly appreciated if you could come down to Bunnings and purchase a sausage sandwich and a drink to help support our fundraising efforts.

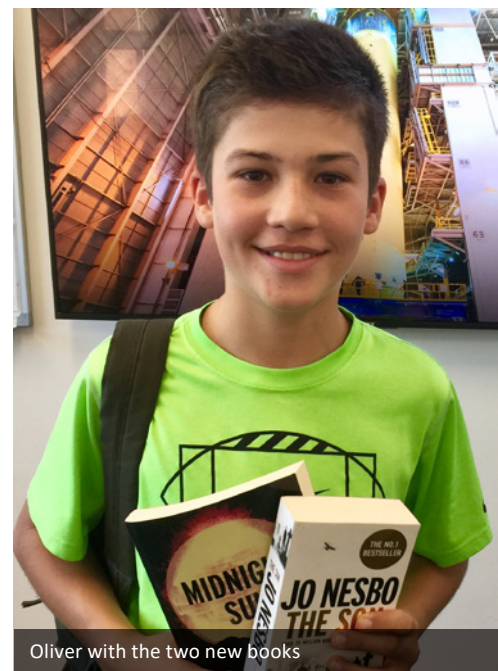
Thanking you all in advance.

— James Le Huray, Assistant Principal

## Big Book Brag

The Berne Library begins 2019 with 200 new titles! It is now a collection of over one thousand non-fiction and more than fifteen hundred fiction books, as well as magazines, comics and graphic novels.

The Science and Technology categories have over 450 titles, and History comes to almost 500 (plus 120 Historical Fiction novels). There are 300 Action and Adventure novels, and almost 350 Fantasy stories. In the Just for Fun and Humour sections we have nearly 450 books to choose from.



Oliver with the two new books

Across all categories there are over 650 books with an easy to read format. All books are available for classroom borrowing, and fiction titles can be borrowed and taken home.

We love it when students suggest a title; thanks to Oliver we now have two new Jo Nesbo books!

— Grant Lee, Teacher

## Berne Gardens

During the school holidays the Berne vegetable gardens continued to thrive. Our sincere thanks to teacher David Riddington who tended to the gardens over the holidays.

So abundant was the garden's produce that two boxes overflowing with organic vegetables and herbs were donated to the Exodus foundation at Ashfield where the staff there used them to make fresh salads and sandwiches for people in need.



Special thanks to David too for mowing the school lawns for us during the long hot summer break.

— Sandra Scott

## Work Experience

A reminder that all Stage 5 students (Years 9 and 10) will take part in Work Experience during Week 9, from Monday 25th March to Friday 29th March. All students have been given work experience forms to present to prospective employers. These consist of a letter of introduction, outlining the work experience program, dates and insurance details and a placement form which is to be completed by the employer and returned to the school.

We encourage students to discuss options and possible career paths with their parents and carers as well as at school.

— Michael Muranty, Work Experience Coordinator

## Project Based Learning

This year The John Berne School staff are implementing a new approach to delivering the curriculum called Project Based Learning (PBL). It is a student centred approach where students gain knowledge and skills through actively investigating and responding to complex and authentic real-world questions, problems, or challenges.

In Stage 4 the driving question incorporates outcomes for Geography and Technology and is proving to be interesting to students:

- How can we make rural life more appealing and sustainable to lessen the human dependence on urban areas?

In Stage 5 the driving question incorporates outcomes for English, History and Personal Development and is dynamic and complex including very current human rights issues:

- How do we create a world where everyone is treated fairly despite race, gender, sexuality and religion?

— Nicole Arathoon, Stage 4 Coordinator

## Living Skills

This year on Fridays, Stage 4 and Stage 5 students will engage in learning living skills such as social skills, maintaining wellbeing and managing finances. This term Stage 5 students are engaging in a unit of work to develop social skills through drama activities.



James with the finished product

Students are exploring the nature of conflict, effective communication, and teamwork through games, play, and structured scenarios.

We are confident that students' exploration of these skills will lead them to grow in all aspects of their lives.

Stage 4 are learning about maintaining wellbeing through diet, nutrition, sleep and growth mindset.



Chef David demonstrating his famous basil picking technique

To kick start the unit, Stage 4 students harvested vegetables from the school garden and used them to learn how to make a healthy pesto sauce of basil, pinenuts, garlic and lemon. Students served the pesto on fresh baguette with tomatoes and enjoyed a nutritious snack.

— Nicole Arathoon, Stage 4 Coordinator

## The Importance of Sleep

Finding it hard to get to sleep at night? Restlessly tossing and turning for hours on end? Waking up tired lacking energy? You're not alone.

Today's society is overworked, over stimulated and extremely sleep deprived. How has something so natural become so uncommon?

Did you know that sleeping fewer than six hours per night has been linked directly to increased risk of chronic diseases such as obesity, type 2 diabetes and other cardiovascular diseases. Even only one nights poor sleep can provoke negative changes in appetite regulation and food intake.

Disrupted or lack of quality sleep is directly linked to poor concentration, negative mood, poor immune function also higher rates of anxiety and depression.

On the flip side; quality sleep has the ability to re energise the body and mind, while allowing the body to repair and recover. Individuals that sleep more, eat less, do more, report being happier and generally are in better overall health.

See the Parents' Corner column for tips on getting a good night's sleep.

— David Riddington, PDHPE Coordinator

## Staff News

A very warm welcome to Supi Taufā'ao who has joined our staff this year as Teacher Assistant. Supi has previously worked with Marist180 and is currently studying Social Work at university.



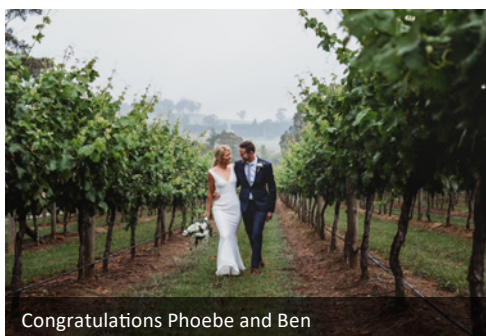
Welcome Supi

Congratulations from the whole Berne community to teacher Melissa on the birth of her daughter and to school counsellor Gemma on the birth of her daughter. Both Melissa and Gemma are currently on parental leave.



Congratulations Melissa

We would also like to extend our congratulations to Phoebe on her wedding to Ben during the school holidays and offer them blessings for their future happiness.



Congratulations Phoebe and Ben

## Stage 4 Coogee Excursion

Last Friday Stage 4 students took a trip to Coogee as part of their PDHPE studies. The water was warm and the sand was hot underfoot as students and staff launched into a competitive game of Ultimate. Nicole put on her spirit fingers to assist David in scoring at least twice.



Nicole sent her team to bags the spot at 4am

There were plenty of swimmers and helpers at the barbeque to round off a lovely trip to the beach.

— *Supi Tufa'ao, Teacher Assistant*

## Save The Date For The Annual Berne Luncheon

Date: Friday 12 April

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

## Tips For a Good Night's Sleep

- Avoid all screens at least one hour before bedtime (no computer, phone, TV, kindle etc)
- Develop a sleep routine (try and get to sleep and wake at the same time every day)
- Avoid caffeinated drinks, high sugar foods, or other activities that will over stimulate the body and mind before going to sleep
- Your room should be as dark as possible; eliminate all light sources eg: phones, electronic clocks, TV red lights etc, installing thick blackout curtains is optimal
- Wind down and do something relaxing like reading before going to sleep
- Complete a gratefulness journal; research has highlighted your thoughts up to 20 minutes prior to going to sleep will have a direct impact on your quality of sleep. Take 5-10 mins to answer these 3 simple questions in a daily journal
  1. Who did you help today?
  2. Who helped you today?
  3. What did you learn today?

This simple trick helps people reflect on their day, realise that someone cares for them, they care for someone else and that they are always learning something. This is a simple way to lower mental stress, and declutter the mind resulting in a far more restorative sleep.

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