



## Dear parents, carers, and friends of Berne

Welcome to the last newsletter of 2020. I am mindful this term like most of the year has been one of great uncertainty and change due to the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic. We are preparing for next year and our Year 10 students have been farewelled by the staff. At our recent Graduation evening the following brief address was made and it is repeated here for the information of the wider community:

*Good evening special guests, parents, staff and students*

*To the graduating class of 2020 - my warmest congratulations!! You have made it to the end of Year 10!!!! You have dedicated yourselves to the completion of Year 10 and ensured a pathway to further education, training and apprenticeships and employment prospects. You are all well equipped to embrace life and make a positive contribution to the future of your world.*

*Well done!*

*I can honestly say this has been a year like no other! – and not just because it was my first as Principal. Sunday the 22nd of March, 2020 is a day none of us will ever forget. It was the day the NSW Premier - Gladys Berejiklian – told NSW parents “if you are able to school your children from home please keep them at home”.*

*Since that day in March we have experienced fear, confusion, frustration, grief, anxiety and loss due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Families have had to make adjustments to their daily lives they could never have imagined. Parents, grandparents and siblings became co-teachers, setting up makeshift classrooms within their homes while continuing to work, some at home and some on the front lines. Teachers juggled planning online lessons for students, attended Zoom meetings and quickly became Google Classroom experts.*

*Although these uncertain times have brought many challenges for everyone, they have also brought us gifts. As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, we have had*

*the opportunity to take a pause and a deep breath and reflect upon what is really important in our lives. In some cases, we have been able to spend more time with our spouses, children and siblings in the past few months than we have in years. In other cases, we have made a conscious effort to connect with distant or isolated friends and family to support them through the struggles of lockdown.*

*I feel this graduating class of 2020 has been a part of a change of focus in the world where appreciation, gratitude, support and collaboration have been brought to the forefront, in particular, appreciation of health care workers, teachers and essential workers. Plus, gratitude for good health, both physical and mental. Here at Berne, I have seen a greater appreciation for our staff from the children and a very positive response to the dedication they showed in continuing to work when other schools had closed.*

*So students of 2020 – what has the year taught you? Here's some ideas I came up with:*

**Thermometer** – Keep an eye on your temperature. Be aware of your emotions and remind yourself to keep your cool in every situation and if you're feeling hot – rest and give yourself time to recover;

**Hand sanitiser** – Protect yourself, always look after yourself and your health. Make good choices for your mind and body and protect yourself from danger;

**Face mask** – don't hide who you are from others. At Berne we hope you have learned to be who you are because you will be loved;

**Toilet paper** – always be prepared for whatever challenges come your way and face them with confidence, kindness and consideration of others;

**Phone** – always stay connected. Your close contacts should be people who love you and care for you and are always just a phone call away.

## Issue 4 2020

### Upcoming Events

**26 January**  
Australia Day

**27, 28, 29 January**  
Staff days - pupil free days

**1 February**  
Students' first day Term 1, 2021

**8 February**  
Parent Information Afternoon

**9 February**  
Opening School Mass

**17 February**  
Ash Wednesday

**8 – 12 March**  
Stage 5 Camps

**22 – 26 March**  
Stage 5 Work Experience

**24 – 26 March**  
Stage 4 Activities

**1 April**  
Students' last day Term 1  
Stations of the Cross

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*In this year like no other, I feel privileged and honoured to have met each and every one of you – who are all unique and valued individuals. I would like to wish you well for whatever path you take now. I pray that each of you remember the wonderful support of your loved ones, the tireless work of the staff at The John Berne School, the vision of St Marcellin Champagnat and the Brothers, the love of Mary and the love and acceptance God has for all of us. Like children taking their first steps, The John Berne community will watch you with pride as you endeavour to go places on your own and we will always be here to support you if you fall.*

*Thank you class of 2020 - and good luck!!*

Finally on behalf of the Berne staff I want to thank you for your support of Berne. I would also like to thank the staff on your behalf for their tireless work and ongoing commitment to holistically educating the students. May God's blessings be with all Berne families and friends this Christmas. Wishing you a happy, holy and peaceful Christmas.

Hope always.

— James Le Huray, Principal

## Farewell Chris Langridge



It is with great sadness and heartfelt gratitude we farewell an integral and longstanding member of our counselling team at the end of term.

Anybody and everybody associated with Berne knows only too well what an amazing and enormous contribution Chris Langridge has made to The John Berne School over the past twenty years.

Chris arrived at Berne as a volunteer in 2000 and commenced here as a Counsellor in 2001. During this time, Chris has shown an unwavering level of commitment, compassion and understanding to the most at risk students.

Chris personifies the marist charism of looking after those most in need. She has devoted the past 20 years to the students at Berne and their families. Chris was always available when a student needed help or was in need of a friendly voice or a listening heart. Many of our past students and their families still reach out to Chris on a regular basis when they need reassurance or advice.

In 2013 Chris received an Appreciation for Outstanding Contribution to Marist Education award, a prestigious Marist Schools Australia accolade recognising her commitment to the work of the Marist Brothers.

We will always be grateful to Chris for her incredibly caring nature, her ability to connect with and form a trusting and non-judgmental relationship with each and every student and her willingness to work around the clock to ensure that students are safe and feel loved and cared for.

Thank you Chris for the outstanding contribution you have made to so many lives.

We wish Chris every blessing for good health and happiness beyond Berne.

## Farewell Dave Stevens



The end of 2020 will see a valued and well respected member of the Berne community, Dave Stevens, leaving to pursue a career with the Department of Communities and Justice as a caseworker.

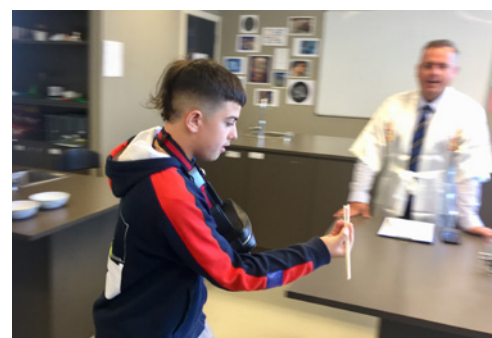
Over the years, Dave has been looked up to by many, especially the Stage 5 students of LS2, as a role model with a love of all things fitness, cooking and gardening. His departure from our team of teachers will leave a hole in the Berne family although we wish him well in his future career.

## LOL Day

On Friday 23 October the students closed their 21st Century laptops and headed back in time for our Love of Learning Day, which this time was all about Ancient History. The emphasis was on finding out about the past while having a great time.

The classes created team banners and competed in games based on ancient civilisations. Chopstick dexterity for Ancient China. A food eating challenge for Ancient Japan. Kitting out the gladiator for Ancient Rome. Wrapping the mummy for Ancient Egypt. Spear hunting for Ancient Australia. And picking the right gods for Ancient Greece. All a bit silly, and the kids loved it. It was a great way of learning outside the classroom. Especially appreciated in these COVID times.

— Grant Lee, Teacher





## Year 10 Graduation

Congratulations to our Year 10 students of 2020 who graduated on Friday 27 November. Students were warmly farewelled, acknowledged for all their hard work and dedication to completing their Year 10 education. Congratulations to all our graduates for 2020:

- Michael Awkar
- Rowan Brewster
- Michael Brogan
- Joe Castellino
- Dylan Henderson
- Maxwell Kelly
- Crystal Kousal
- Gabriel Madden
- Hemi Martyn
- Jemma McWhinney
- Jake Robinson
- Connor Sansotta



Many thanks to Fr Gary Perritt for celebrating Mass with us and for his uplifting and thought provoking homily. Thank you too to Fr Sam Lynch and Summer Hill Parish for allowing us to hold the graduation in their parish hall.



Special congratulations to our major prize winners this year who were recognised for their achievements and contributions to the school community.

### David Hordern Award

presented for excellence in work experience: Hemi Martyn

**Liza Adams Award** presented for application or achievement in Mathematics: Jemma McWhinney

### The Geoffrey George Award

presented for service to the school community: Connor Sansotta

**Reuben F Scarf Award** presented for consistent effort and desire to improve: Joe Castellino

**Br Michael Flanagan Award** presented for courage and perseverance in adversity: Crystal Kousal and Dylan Henderson



**Jean-Baptiste Berne Award** presented for personal improvement: Jake Robinson

**Champagnat Award** presented for character, stability and good example: Rowan Brewster



Thank you again to our supporters, special guests Dr John Robinson, Br Darren Burge, Br Michael Flanagan and Ms Liza Adams, and to Berne staff, parents and students for making the graduation such a wonderful event.



## Welcome new students

We would like to welcome new students who have joined our school this term. A very warm welcome to Ayden and Max in Stage 5.



## Thank you Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club

Our sincere and heartfelt thanks to Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club for their support of our Breakfast Program with a grant of \$5,000. This generous support is greatly appreciated.







Without our Breakfast Program many students who come to Berne would start the day without breakfast arriving at school not having eaten since the night before, with no lunch nor money to purchase lunch at the canteen.

Hunger affects a child's ability to learn. Current research has found that children who have access to breakfast at school have improved concentration, engagement, focus and better academic outcomes.

Berne's Breakfast Program is more than just nutrition. It provides the opportunity for us to engage and develop relationships with our students as well as provide the nourishment they need to get through the school day.

We hope to raise \$10,000 to help us keep this program going.

To support us please go to

<https://www.thejohnberneschool.org/get-involved/donate-now/>

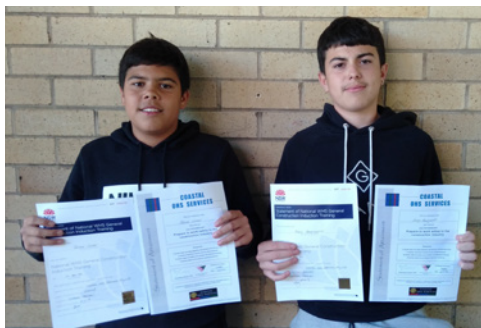
and make a donation. We appreciate any support no matter how big or small. Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

## Thank you WestConnex

The John Berne School endeavours to prepare our students with life skills, work experiences and qualifications in preparation for life beyond Berne at the end of Year 10. This term a cohort of our Stage 5 students completed a one day course at Berne to prepare them to work safely in the construction industry. Successfully achieving the National WHS General Construction Industry Training qualification is a first step towards future employment opportunities in careers and trades involved in the construction industry.

We are very grateful to WestConnex for giving us a grant to cover the cost of this

training. WestConnex also gave us money to purchase appropriate clothing, work boots and shoes for our students to use when on work experience placements. With COVID-19 restrictions lifting, we hope our students will again be able to participate in our Work Experience program in 2021.



## Term 4 Attendance Raffles

Students who attend school on time earn a ticket to enter our Attendance Raffle which is drawn in the middle and end of each term. Congratulations to Jack and Ben our Term 4 winners who each won a \$50 gift voucher.



## Students vs Staff Volleyball

As part of our end of year celebrations students and staff held a volleyball tournament. Over a series of four, friendly but highly competitive games, the staff team was victorious winning the competition 3 to 1. Both students and staff displayed their agility and volleyball skills throughout the event.

At the end of the day staff team leader, Tanja, could not help gloating and much to the students' chagrin, plastered the school with posters of the elated staff winning team.

The event was a great success and the students will be offered the chance to redeem themselves in a return match next year.



*We wish all families a happy, safe and restful break over the school holidays.*

*Students will return to school for Term 1 2021 on*

***Monday 1st February***

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