

# The John Berne School

Hope Always

Issue 1 2024 Newsletter

Dear parents, carers, and friends of Berne



As we come to the end of a vibrant and successful Term 1, it is with great joy and gratitude that The Berne Community reflects on its accomplishments and successes. The past few months have been filled with moments of growth, learning, and community spirit, and we are proud of all we have achieved together. From engaging classroom discussions to exciting extracurricular activities, the students have shown dedication, resilience, and a commitment to personally achieve success and their educators have worked tirelessly to support them.

At Berne, we stand together as a community to provide support, guidance, and encouragement to all our students. The sense of camaraderie and support permeating our school community has been truly inspiring, and it is a testament to the values of safety, respect, and positive learning at The John Berne School. As we prepare to transition into the school holiday season, we do so with a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. The hard work and effort put in by our students, teachers, and other staff have not gone unnoticed, and we are grateful for the sense of fulfillment that comes from a successful term. While the school holidays offer a well-deserved break from the rigors of academic life, they also present an opportunity for reflection, rejuvenation, and personal growth.

It is also important to talk about the celebration of Easter earlier in the term as it was a time of reflection, renewal, and hope. Easter serves as a beacon of light, guiding us towards a path of resilience, strength, and unwavering faith. During the Easter season, the Berne community came together to celebrate with various activities and events to highlight the themes of faith, love, and resilience, including completing the Stations of the Cross on Holy Thursday.

While Easter is a time widely recognised for its religious significance, it also holds a special place in our hearts as a community that supports and uplifts students who may be facing challenges or feel at risk. Berne aims to create a supportive and inclusive environment where every student feels valued and embraced. We believe in the power of hope and renewal, especially for those who may be going through difficult times and Easter serves as a reminder that no matter the obstacles we face, there is always a chance for new beginnings and a brighter tomorrow. As we reflected on the story of Easter at Berne, we were reminded of the ultimate message of love and redemption. Easter is a time to let go of past mistakes, embrace forgiveness, and look towards the future with renewed hope and positivity. We understand the journey towards success and well-being may have its challenges, but Berne students are

## Upcoming Events

**30 April**

Students return Term 2

**May (3 dates to be advised)**

Stage 4 Activities

**13 May**

Parent / Staff Interviews

**20 – 24 May**

Stage 5 Camp

**21 May**

Reconciliation Week Assembly

**6 June**

Champagnat Day Mass

**17 – 21 June**

Stage 5 Work Experience

**5 July**

Students last day of Term 2

**23 July**

Students return Term 3

encouraged to see Easter as an opportunity for personal growth, reflection, and a fresh start. So, as we celebrated Easter, we came together in unity and solidarity, embracing the Easter message of hope and renewal.

We hope the Easter season brought joy, peace, and a sense of purpose to all our students, reminding them they are cherished members of our community, worthy of love and support. So, together, let us embrace the spirit of Easter and carry its message of hope in our hearts as we continue to journey forward, hand in hand, towards a brighter and more promising future.

Wishing you all a blessed and joyful Easter season.

Hope Always

James Le Huray  
Principal



## Welcome New Students

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to the students who have joined our school this term – Ashton, Daniel, Emma and Jackson in Year 7; Beau, Joshua and ShiHyeong in Year 8; David and Marcus in Year 9; Cruz, Sasha, Tyler and Zachary in Year 10.

## Stations of the Cross at Berne



There has been a long tradition at Berne to pray the Stations of the Cross as Lent is ending. This reflection and prayer on Jesus' last first hours has a long history among Christians. Jesus went through abandonment, denial, slander, torture and execution so we humans could understand a far better way, God's way. The stations replace the pilgrimage to where this all happened. We had images around the garden and read a gospel account at each and then chanted a Taizé prayer (Jesus, remember we what you come into your kingdom) while moving to the next station. Everyone was very involved and reflective. It is fitting to end with the final prayer said:

*We have relived your great suffering and are in awe of a God who so willingly shared with all humans the pain of betrayal, abandonment, torture, and death.*

*Help each of us lessen human suffering. Guide us so we may transform this evil into forgiveness, hope, love and peace as you have done by conquering death.*

*We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen*

- Br Chris Hogan

# Stage 5 Camp

During this term, Stage 5 hosted two thriving camps near Bundeena in the Royal National Park. Students were divided into two groups and each group enjoyed a three-day, two-night expedition filled with bushwalking, fishing, canoeing, and swimming activities.

Arriving at camp, students demonstrated remarkable efficiency in setting up and readily embraced their new environment. What truly made our camp exceptional was its proximity to the beach, offering students the freedom to swim and fish at their leisure. Both groups were given the chance to venture into the Royal National Park, participating in daytime bushwalks and evening fishing expeditions.

The students this year exhibited remarkable prowess in fishing, with many achieving notable catches. A special mention goes out to Cruz, Jake and Hugh. Cruz landed a silver bream and Jake landed a flat head both measuring over 40 centimetres. Whilst Hugh successfully caught a mud crab large enough to eat. These feats could potentially be one of the largest catches in Berne camp history.

The first group of students had the opportunity to hike a 6km trail to reach the Figure 8 pools. They were very fortunate to encounter favourable weather conditions, which allowed them to undertake this journey. Taking on the challenge, every student successfully completed the hike. Once students reached their destination, the group took a moment to appreciate the picturesque view, with some choosing to take a dip in the rock pools while others tried their hand at crab-catching with only Lucien successfully catching a small one.

The second group was treated to a coastal walk and a rejuvenating swim at Wattamolla which was definitely needed. While the trek wasn't as lengthy as the Figure 8 pools hike, one of the standout moments at Wattamolla was the chance to swim near a charming waterfall. Most students eagerly plunged into the water, with some even daring to venture underneath the waterfall.

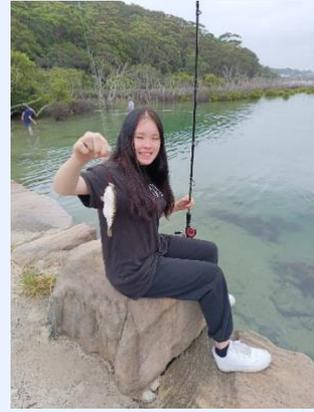
In addition to the activities, students forged strong bonds with each other during the non-camp activities such as meal times. We all came together to share meals as one community, with students partaking in the cooking of meals and participating in clean up duties, which everyone contributed.

A nightly highlight was the gathering around the portable wood fired BBQ, where students enjoyed roasting marshmallows, crafting cookie s'mores, and sharing stories about their day and memorable moments.

This was undeniably an experience cherished by all participants. A heartfelt thank you goes out to the diligent staff and students who contributed to the enjoyable atmosphere of the camp. Lastly, a special note of thanks is owed to Tanja (Stage 5 Coordinator) for her exceptional organisation and leadership.

- Supi Taufa'ao  
Teacher Assistant





# Stage 4 Activities

Stage 4 students immersed themselves in a whirlwind of excitement and joy as they participated in Activities Week. From encountering amazing wildlife at Sydney Zoo to conquering treetop challenges and jumping off the wharves, doing Manu dives at Clifton Garden. Each day brought a new adventure and opportunity for students to connect and grow with each other.

- Luke Drummond, Stage 4 Teacher

## Sydney Zoo

The week began with a visit to the local zoo, where students immersed themselves in the wonders of the animal kingdom. We walked around the zoo, and looked at all the animals. We saw monkeys, elephants, lions, tigers, and wombats. My favourite part of the day was the elephants, especially the baby elephant pooping in the water. This activity was good.

- Jackson (Stage 4 student)

## Treetops Adventure

The next day, we got our adrenaline pumping and took to the trees for some awesome zip-lining and obstacle course. There were four levels and we had to go through them easiest to hardest. We started on blue and finished in record time, green was a bit harder but we flew through it all the same. We had to wait for everyone to make it before we started red, as it was much harder. There were some difficulties, we had to get help by a staff member a couple of times when something got stuck and it took much longer, but in the end, we still made it through and had a lot of fun along the way.

- Emma (Stage 4 student)

## Clifton Gardens

For our last activity, we went to Clifton Gardens. The first thing we did was go for a swim. One of my favourite highlights was jumping from the wharf, I jumped it at least 30 times. A few of us did go fishing, and went for a little rock walk. Overall, I'd say it was the best activity out of the three we did.

- Patrick K (Stage 4 student)

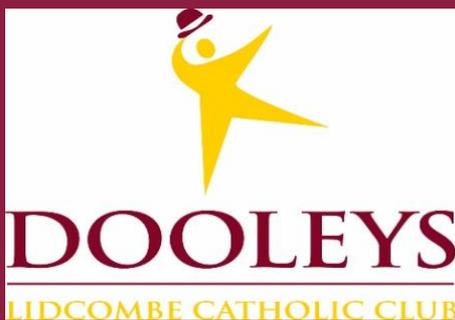


# Work Experience



Work Experience can be incredibly valuable and gives our students opportunities to develop their job-ready skills and learn first-hand about the world of work and what different workplaces are like. This term our Stage 5 students completed a week of work experience in a variety of different industries and workplaces including: retail; hospitality; labour hire; dog grooming; ceramics; museum; plumbing; plastering; media; locksmiths; landscaping; automotive industries; golf club; disability services; and information technology.

We would like to acknowledge and thank the host employers who generously gave of their time and shared their knowledge with our students.



## Thank you

Our sincere thanks to Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club for their very generous grant towards our mentoring program. We are sincerely grateful for their support with this grant which will help to shape brighter futures for our student mentees.

# Lunchtime Dungeons and Dragons: Where Adventure Awaits



This term, Tuesday and Wednesday lunchtimes have become a realm of magic and adventure. Students have the opportunity to gather together in the school library for Dungeons and Dragons, a game that transcends mere entertainment.

For those who don't know, Dungeons and Dragons is more than just a game. It's a collaborative storytelling experience where students take on the roles of characters in a fantasy world. It is facilitated by a Dungeon Master who narrates the story where students navigate through challenges, battles, and mysteries, all while making choices that shape the story. A special shout out goes to Sasha and Emma, two creative students who undertook the role of dungeon master this term leading the story to unimaginable heights.

From an educational point of view, Dungeons and Dragons enables our students to explore their own creativity, teamwork, and even empathy. They forge friendships, develop leadership skills, and discover their inner heroes.

Dungeons and Dragons is open to all students and new members are always welcomed.

- Supi Taufa'ao  
Teacher Assistant

## Farewell Sandra

As Sandra bids farewell after 21 remarkable years at the John Berne School, 2 years as a parent of an ex student and 19 years in office administration, we reflect on the profound impact she has had on our school community. Her expertise in securing grants and donor support has been instrumental in advancing our programs and opportunities for students and staff.

Beyond her professional achievements, Sandra's kindness, warmth, and unwavering dedication to students, staff and parents have left an enduring imprint on our hearts. Her guidance and willingness to go above and beyond have touched countless lives, shaping the fabric of our school's culture.

While we will miss Sandra dearly, we celebrate her legacy of excellence and wish her the very best in her next chapter. Thank you, Sandra, for your years of service, passion, and inspiration. You will always be a cherished part of our school's history.



# School Travel Passes

## ~ Information for parents and students

### School Travel Passes

Students who require a School Opal card or travel pass but have not yet applied need to [apply](#) or [update](#) their details as soon as possible.

In the Opal network, students should travel with a Child/Youth Opal card until they receive their valid School Opal card. If outside Greater Sydney, parents should contact their [local bus operator](#) to discuss their travel needs.

New Student Opal cards (including new Term Bus Passes) will be sent to the student's nominated postal address within two weeks of their application being approved.

Students living in rural and regional areas will receive their travel pass from their nominated transport operator. It may be issued via their school or be sent directly to them at home. **Note:** some rural and regional operators do not issue travel passes. Students/parents should confirm with their nominated operator if they do not receive a pass.

### Terms of Use

Students using School Opal cards must tap on and tap off in line with the [Opal terms of use](#).

This includes travel within the approved times between 6.30am and 7.00pm from Monday to Friday on school days only. Students must use their child/youth Opal for any travel outside these times.

All students are required to comply with the [Student code of conduct](#). The code of conduct aims to ensure the safety and well-being of school children and other passengers. It is important that parents ensure their child is aware of this, as failure to comply with the code of conduct can result in a suspension from travel.

## Follow Berne on Facebook and Instagram

To find out what we are up to on a regular basis, you can follow Berne on Facebook and Instagram. We regularly post photos and stories about what's happening at school. We're easy to find - simply enter '@TheJohnBerneSchool' in the search tabs.



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