The John Berne School

Hope Always

.

Annual Report 2025

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The John Berne School
Principal: Mr. James Le Huray

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About this Report

The John Berne School (Berne) is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by Marist Schools Australia Limited, the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the Education Act 1990 (NSW).

The Annual School Report to the Community provides parents, carers and the wider school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education. The Report also outlines information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance during the year and the achievements arising from the implementation of the school's Annual Improvement Plan.

The Report demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies and the school community.

This Report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters and other regular communications. Further information about the school may be obtained by contacting the school or by visiting the school website at The John Berne School.

PRINCIPAL: **James Le Huray**

DATE: **30 June 2026**

Message from Key Groups in our Community

Message from the Regional Director

The 2025 Annual Report offers rich insights into the vibrant Catholic learning community that is The John Berne School, Lewisham. Founded in 1975, the vision and daily life of the College continue to be animated by the person and Good News of Jesus Christ and enriched by the charism of St Marcellin Champagnat and Marist tradition, spirituality and distinctive approach to learning and teaching.

The theme embraced by Australian Marist schools this year, Pilgrims of Hope: Look Beyond, invites us to recognise that faith is lived as a journey with and towards a God of love. This love is known and experienced through human kindness, generosity, and compassion, and it is the source and foundation of our hope. In the Marist tradition, hope is not passive or sentimental, but active and courageous, expressed in relationships that honour dignity, nurture belonging, and serve the common good.

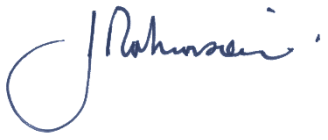
Throughout 2025, the College community has sought to express this theme in practical and visible ways. Hope has been expressed in acts both great and small: in standing with others, in choosing hospitality over indifference, and in remaining faithful even amid challenge and uncertainty. Such hope frees us to love generously, knowing that we do not walk alone. As pilgrims, we are continually invited to look beyond the surface of life to see more deeply, to love more fully, and to care more attentively for others.

This Annual Report illustrates the College's ongoing commitment to being a place of hope, of learning and a community where authentic Marist life and mission is expressed in daily life. We celebrate the College's continued emphasis on providing contemporary, lifegiving educational opportunities that enable each student to flourish. We acknowledge the dedication and professionalism of all staff in their pursuit of excellence in learning and teaching, grounded in the belief that every child is precious and every student can learn.

We extend our sincere thanks to our families and the wider College community for your trust, partnership, and support throughout the year. Your shared commitment to the wellbeing of one another and strengthening the partnerships integral to this community are at the core of this fine Catholic school educating in the Marist tradition.

As we reflect on the life of the College during 2025 and look to the future with confidence and hope, we commend this Annual Report to you and celebrate the ongoing achievements of the students, staff, and the broader family of The John Berne School, Lewisham.

We pray with Mary, our Good Mother, that God will continue to bless and guide The John Berne School community.



Dr John Kyle-Robinson
Regional Director
Marist Schools Australia

Message from the Principal

I am pleased to write this preface to The John Berne School (Berne) Annual Report for 2025. As I reflect on the year, I am filled with gratitude and pride for all that we have achieved together as a school community. Our school exists to support young people who have found mainstream education challenging, students who benefit from a more personalised approach, deeper understanding, and consistent encouragement. In every classroom, every program, and every interaction, our mission has remained clear: to nurture the potential of each student, restore confidence, and walk alongside them as they discover their strengths and sense of purpose.

Enrolments in 2025 remained steady, with student numbers consistent throughout the year. We farewelled our graduating Year 10 students with pride and celebrated the many achievements they attained during their time at Berne. At the same time, we warmly welcomed new students and families into our community, continuing our commitment to providing a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment.

This year has again demonstrated the extraordinary difference that compassionate and relationship-centred education can make in the lives of young people. Our staff continue to go above and beyond in their roles, not only as educators, but also as mentors, advocates, and trusted supports for our students. I extend my sincere thanks to every member of staff for the care, professionalism, and dedication you show each day. Your commitment has a profound and lasting impact on the lives of the students entrusted to our care.

We also acknowledge with deep appreciation the ongoing support of the Marist Brothers. Their guidance, values, and presence continue to shape our school as a place of hope, belonging, and transformation. Through their example, we are reminded of the importance of faith, compassion, service, and community in education.

To our parents, carers, and the wider community, thank you for your trust, encouragement, and partnership throughout the year. Your support strengthens our school community and helps us create the foundations from which our students can grow with confidence and resilience.

As we look ahead, we remain steadfast in our mission to ensure that every young person at The John Berne School is known, valued, and supported. Berne is a place where students are welcomed and nurtured regardless of their background or beliefs, and where the principles of our Catholic faith continue to provide a strong foundation for learning, wellbeing, and future success.

May God continue to bless and guide our school community in all that we do.

Hope Always.

Mr James Le Huray
Principal
The John Berne School

Contextual Information

The John Berne School (Berne) is a co-educational Special Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Sydney, owned and operated by the Marist Brothers under the management of Marist Schools Australia Limited. The School's primary objective is to educate marginalised students in Years 7 to 10 from the greater Sydney region who, for a variety of reasons, struggle to function in a mainstream schooling setting. Berne provides a secure, safe, enriching and challenging environment which gives students in difficulty a second chance at achieving the educational outcomes that will enable them the opportunity to reach their potential. We aim to present the curriculum in an engaging and innovative manner to develop skills and knowledge to support our students' goals.

In addition to a complete curriculum, a number of special programs for our students and their families are offered. These include:

Literacy and Numeracy

Many students arrive at Berne with significant learning needs and without a solid grounding in literacy and numeracy. Our priority is to address this by conducting a comprehensive evaluation of each student's literacy and numeracy needs. Once these are identified, students are placed into a Literacy Skills group and additional 1:1 support is provided if necessary. All students attend a Skills lesson each day as part of the academic program. Students whose literacy skills are at an age-appropriate level are given an individual program to further enhance their literacy. Regular student assessment and evaluation help ensure that our program effectively meets their needs. Our internal data shows that students who successfully complete the reading program see significant improvements.

Experiential Learning Opportunities

At various times during the week, a flexible curriculum is provided where students have the opportunity to engage in a variety of activities and programs. A majority of these are aimed at educating students experientially in areas such as social skills and skills for living in order for them to more confidently and positively engage with wider society. Some examples include:

- Viewing films and plays relevant to a particular learning area or to broaden students' understanding of the world.
- Day outings to various parts of Sydney for physical and leisure activities such as swimming, bushwalking, fishing and rock climbing.

- Cooking - involving budgeting, nutrition, food safety and teamwork.
- Programs facilitated by external providers, for example: The Man Cave, Winds of Change and West Tigers Unite Harmony Program.

Breakfast Program

Our Breakfast Program supports students' health, wellbeing, and engagement in learning by providing access to nutritious food at the beginning of each school day, ensuring no student starts the day hungry. Each morning, students are welcomed into a calm and inclusive environment where they can enjoy breakfast together under the supervision and care of staff and volunteers.

Job Ready Program

The John Berne School provides a range of vocational preparation programs to prepare students for the workplace, teaching skills such as writing a job application, interview techniques and telephone protocol. The program also instructs students in appropriate workplace behaviour and communication. Throughout Years 9 and 10, students participate in up to eight weeks of work experience placements, enabling them to have authentic experiences of the work environment and giving them opportunities to try out a range of avenues which could help to determine their own personal employment pathways for the future. Suitable candidates are also given the opportunity to undertake training to obtain their White Card qualification.

Outdoor Education Program

Our Outdoor Education Program remains an integral part of the curriculum, providing students with opportunities to participate in day excursions and extended camps each term.

Through activities such as hiking, canoeing, sailing, swimming, bike riding, rock climbing, and snow sports, students engage in meaningful, hands-on learning experiences that promote resilience, teamwork, independence, responsibility, and positive social behaviours. Programs are carefully planned and flexible to support students' individual needs, capabilities, and changing weather conditions.
Staff work alongside students to foster respectful relationships, personal growth, and a sense of achievement, through physically and emotionally challenging opportunities.

Psychology and Counselling Services

The school is staffed internally by highly trained and experienced psychologists who work with teaching staff and students to create the safe and supportive environment necessary for change to occur. Students have a range of assessments available through our psychologists and regularly attend counselling sessions.

Programs for Families

Staff regularly engage and collaborate with parents and carers regarding their child's educational needs. Parents and carers are supported to best assist their child educationally, socially, emotionally and behaviourally. This includes:

- ongoing collaboration of school staff with parents and carers, to implement strategies to best support the individual student.
- helping parents to understand their child's learning needs and how they can best support them.
- assisting parents in the management of their child's mental health and emotional needs.
- providing help and support to both students and parents in returning to mainstream schools, other educational settings or employment.

Catholic Identity and Mission

At The John Berne School, we warmly invite our community to celebrate and reflect upon our Catholic identity and mission through this Annual Report. We honour our Marist Catholic heritage with both gratitude and responsibility, striving to bring the values of the Gospel and the teachings of our Catholic faith to life in all aspects of school life.

Throughout 2025, the Catholic life of the school continued to flourish through prayer, reflection, liturgical celebrations, and community gatherings. Significant occasions such as Champagnat Day and John Berne Day provided meaningful opportunities for students, staff, and families to come together in faith, celebrate our shared values, and strengthen our sense of belonging. The presence and contribution of the Marist Brothers within our community continue to be a visible reminder of the Marist commitment to the education, wellbeing, and spiritual growth of young people.

Religious Education remains an important part of student learning and engagement at Berne. Through classroom discussions, reflection, and shared experiences, students are encouraged to explore questions of faith, purpose, compassion, and social justice in ways that are meaningful and relevant to their lives.

Staff were also encouraged throughout the year to deepen their understanding of Marist spirituality and Catholic identity through professional learning, reflection opportunities, and participation in Marist programs and initiatives. Whole-school liturgies and term Masses continued to provide moments of connection and reflection for the community, with familiar rituals and traditions reinforcing the values that underpin our school culture.

Most importantly, it is through the compassion, respect, and care shown each day by staff that the Gospel values are most clearly expressed within our school community. The school motto, *Hope Always*, continues to guide and inspire our work, reflecting our commitment to ensuring every young person is welcomed, supported, and encouraged to believe in their future.

Characteristics of the School Body

Student Enrolment

The School caters for students in Years 7 – 10. Students attending this School come from diverse backgrounds and nationalities from all over the greater Sydney region. The following information describes the student profile for 2025:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
7	32	0	45

** Language background other than English*

Enrolment Procedures

Enrolment enquiries are invited at any time in the school year. Families are encouraged to make enquiries by telephoning the school office or by completing an enquiry form on the school website Enrolment | The John Berne School A visit and tour of the school is welcome by appointment.

A family enrolment enquiry form and a school enrolment enquiry form are to be completed along with supporting documentation. The documents required include the young person's Birth Certificate, immunisation records, previous school reports, reports from medical practitioners, psychologist reports and any relevant medical records. A passport, with documents validating the young person's current VISA status, is also necessary if the young person does not hold Australian citizenship.

In considering an enrolment application, the Principal will determine on the basis of the information and advice provided if the student and family meet the criteria to fit into the School program before arranging an enrolment interview. An offer of enrolment is made to the student and family if it is deemed the student is ready to enrol at Berne and the student and their family understand the mission, ethos, policies and procedures of The John Berne School.

Following the acceptance of a student's enrolment application, the student is assigned to one of the Berne counselling team who will assist the student in their induction into Berne and provide counselling support throughout their enrolment.

Total fees are made up of the tuition fees and materials fees. The school has a policy of maintaining fees similar to a Catholic systemic school. A pastoral approach is adopted for parents experiencing genuine difficulty with the payment of fees.

This enrolment process is consistent with the enrolment policy and philosophy of the Marist Brothers of the Sydney Province for Marist Schools Australia Limited (MSA) governed schools.

Continued Enrolment

A student's continued enrolment at The John Berne School is dependent on their maintaining a positive, cooperative and engaged commitment to the school's programs, ethos, policies and procedures. Every effort is made by staff to assist students in making the most of the opportunities provided for them. Staff are dedicated to working with parents and carers to achieve the best outcomes possible.

Compliance

In compliance with the NSW Education Standards Authority Registration Manual, The John Berne School keeps a register, in a form approved by the Minister, of the enrolment of all young people at the School.

Student Attendance

Absence is defined by:

- All Day Absence - Explained
- All Day Absence - Unexplained/Unjustified
- All Day Absence - Exemption

Attendance rates disaggregated by year group are shown in the following table:

Year Group	Attendance Rate (%)
Year 7	69.79%
Year 8	77.98%
Year 9	75.25%
Year 10	71.39%
Average Years 7 to 10	74.15%

Managing Student Non-attendance

The John Berne School is a school for students who struggle to cope in a mainstream school setting and a large number of our student population have a history of school refusal or have had poor attendance records at previous schools. Attendance rates fluctuate annually, reflecting the personal situation of the student cohort at the time. If a student is not at school by 9.30 am, the office staff will make a telephone call or send a text message or email to the parents or caregivers if no contact has been made by them to explain their child's absence.

Staff at The John Berne School are committed to establishing good working relationships with parents and carers to help better manage students with poor school attendance due to mental health or other issues impacting their school attendance. Parents and carers are offered support by school counsellors, pastoral care teams and teachers.

In situations where school attendance is a significant issue, the Principal or a member of the school staff, accompanied by a counsellor or school Chaplain, will visit the student and their family at home to further help resolve problems with attendance.

Student Post-School Destinations

Each year, the school collects destination data for the Year 10 student cohort. In 2025, 11 students graduated from Year 10 at The John Berne School. As of the end of February 2026, the post-school destinations of the 2025 graduating cohort, all of whom completed the full range of programs offered by the school, are as follows:

64% enrolled in Year 11 at another school
9% apprenticeship
0% enrolled in other education or training
9% engaged in employment
18% not engaged in education or employment, or unable to be contacted

Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2025:

Total Teaching Staff*	Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander Teaching Staff	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
13	0	9	22

* This number includes 12.8 full-time equivalent teaching staff and 8.6 full-time equivalent non-teaching staff

Professional Learning

The ongoing professional development of each staff member is highly valued at The John Berne School with each attending 5 - 10 hours of external professional development per year. Professional learning can take many forms including whole school staff days, webinars, subject specific in-services, meetings and conferences and a range of professional learning programs provided by the Australian Independent Schools (AIS) and independent organisations. The School takes responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating and tracking its staff professional learning and individual staff members take responsibility for their ongoing professional development.

During 2025, the staff at The John Berne School participated in a number of Professional Development opportunities.

Selected staff attended various in-services including:

- Assistant Principal's Conference
- Marist Formation, Ecology of the Heart - Cairns
- Principals of MSA Governed Schools - Marist Centre, Melbourne
- Disability Network Meeting NCCD
- Bronze Medallion
- Faith Formators Colloquium

As a whole school, staff attended in-services including:

- DRS ABCD: CPR Refresher Course

Standards categories as accredited by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA):

Australian Teaching Standards		Number of Teachers
1	Provisional or conditionally classified teacher	1
2	Proficient teacher	11
3	Highly Accomplished teacher	-
4	Lead teacher	-

Please note: the accreditation at the levels of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher is voluntary (although there are teachers who take on these roles in our schools).

Curriculum, Learning and Teaching

The School follows the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) syllabus for each course offered as required for Registration and Accreditation under the Education Act 1990 (NSW). The Curriculum Coordinator ensures that all programs include outcomes, teaching and learning activities and assessment tasks which are accessible by students at all academic levels. Classes are small in size making the learning environment conducive to:

- student-centered teaching and learning methods
- one-on-one attention
- a positive and collaborative relationship between student and teacher
- differentiating learning to cater to low, medium and high abilities
- interactive, innovative and interesting teaching and learning strategies are employed which support the principles of Authentic Learning
- enhanced student agency allowing greater ownership of their own learning
- students building relevant skills and a greater knowledge of key information becoming better prepared for success in the future

The John Berne School offers five core subjects: English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities (Geography and History) and Personal Development Health Physical Education (PDHPE). The following additional subjects are also offered:

Stage Four: Visual Arts, Music, Technology (mandatory), Languages Other Than English (Italian), Religious Education, Living Skills

Stage Five: Religious Education and Living Skills

Project Based Learning: Students work on a project over the term which engages them in solving a real-world problem or answering a complex question. They demonstrate their knowledge and skills by creating a public product or presentation for a real audience. As a result, students develop deep content knowledge as well as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and communication skills. Staff created programs which integrated subjects together under the one theme. Outcomes are assigned to all programs and assessment tasks focused on specific outcomes.

Outcomes and Results

National Assessment Program in Literacy and Numeracy

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievement in literacy and numeracy. An analysis of these results assists school planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs. The table below provides a comparison between the school's average in 2025, students with similar background and the average achieved in all Australian schools. Literacy is reported in four content strands (aspects): Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Numeracy is reported as a single content strand.

	Reading			Writing			Spelling			Grammar			Numeracy		
	JBS	**SIM**	**ALL**	**JBS**	**SIM**	**ALL**	**JBS**	**SIM**	**ALL**	**JBS**	**SIM**	**ALL**	**JBS**	**SIM**	**ALL**
Year 9	502	523	568	462	498	575	506	531	569	460	501	559	500	531	573
Year 7	500	512	538	520	524	538	533	537	542	483	507	539	489	518	545

NAPLAN participation for this school is 88%

NAPLAN participation for all Australian students is 95%

The My School website My School provides detailed information and comparative data for national literacy and numeracy testing.

Record of Student Achievement (RoSA)

Eligible students who leave school before receiving their Higher School Certificate will receive the NSW Record of School Achievement (RoSA). The RoSA has been designed to provide grades for all Stage 5 (Year 10) and Stage 6 (Preliminary) courses completed during secondary education. In 2025, the number of Berne students issued with a RoSA was 11.

School Policies

Pastoral Care Policy

Pastoral care is the support given to students for their development as a person. It relates to the total care of students and involves tending to both the academic and non-academic needs of students, including their spiritual, emotional and social wellbeing. Pastoral care recognises the overriding principle of acting in the best interests of the child. The John Berne School is committed to providing a safe, supportive and social environment where students feel nurtured as they learn. To this end, we have developed, and continue to develop, a comprehensive range of pastoral care policies and procedures that are designed to promote the social and emotional wellbeing of our students in areas such as:

- independence
- resilience
- social awareness
- personal responsibility
- healthy living
- healthy minds
- empathy and emotional intelligence
- cultural awareness.

All School staff are responsible for pastoral care, and for administering pastoral care in all classes and extracurricular activities.

Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy

Every student has the right to a learning environment free from bullying and intimidation and to feel safe and happy at school. They also have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity. Discipline is necessary to ensure the safety and welfare of all our students, teachers and staff and to provide a conducive learning environment.
Our policy sets the framework through which The John Berne School manages student discipline.

The School seeks to develop a culture of positive discipline by setting clear expectations of students and encouraging positive behaviour. Strategies for developing this culture include:

- clearly setting behaviour expectations

- establishing specific teaching and learning programs
- communicating expectations with the wider School community
- acknowledging positive behaviours in a range of ways from informal verbal acknowledgement through to structured merit awards
- maintaining records with respect to student behaviour.

It is our policy that we prohibit corporal punishment; we do not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school personnel, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school.

The use of any corporal punishment by a staff member is strictly prohibited. Any staff member who breaches this rule will be subject to disciplinary proceedings, which may include dismissal.

Students have a right to procedural fairness in dealings that involve their interests. This includes disciplinary decisions. The principles of procedural fairness include the right of students to:

- know what the rules are and what behaviour is expected of them
- have decisions determined by a reasonable and unbiased person
- be informed of, and have an opportunity to respond to, any allegations against them
- be heard before a decision is made
- have a decision reviewed (but not to delay an immediate discipline).

The John Berne School is committed to ensuring procedural fairness when disciplining a student.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The John Berne School adopts a whole-school approach to bullying. Staff have continued to update our bullying policy based on consultation, collaboration and the evolving nature of bullying. Students, parents and staff are encouraged to report bullying behaviour. Once bullying is reported, staff confront the matter using Restorative Justice practices as a means of resolving the conflict between members of the school community.

Regular communication about bullying is published in our school newsletter and discussions occur at our Parent and Staff evenings held four times a year. The School's *Bullying Policy* is consistent with and based upon the National Framework for Safe Schools.

Complaints Handling Policy

The School's *Complaints Policy* is based upon procedural fairness and recognises that parents, caregivers and school staff have access to the processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive and conciliatory environment. Concerns raised are responded to promptly, fairly and in accordance with the procedures outlined in the policy with confidentiality maintained throughout the process.

Child Safety Policy

The John Berne School is a Special School owned and conducted by the Marist Brothers. The Marist Brothers were founded for the education and Christian formation of young people, especially the least favoured. Our goals are the same as those of any school: all true education aims at producing persons for others, people who can live outside themselves for others. This may sound overly simplistic in a school for young people facing complex challenges but any goal less than this fails to respect these children as human beings who share the same joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties as all other persons. However, we can state our goals more precisely:

- To assist children and young people to appreciate themselves as worthwhile and capable human beings;
- To assist children and young people in the process of realising their God-given potential;
- To prepare children and young people to take their place as just and responsible members of society;
- To prepare children and young people to share their skills and talents with others in the workforce, and thereby contribute to the common good;
- To provide a safe, secure, enriching and challenging environment;
- To provide a second chance for children and young people in difficulty, outreaching to their families and wider social networks.

Any report or suspicion of abuse or endangerment is handled with compassion, promptness and integrity, in the interests of justice and reconciliation.

Enrolment Policy

The John Berne School is a coeducational Catholic School in the Marist tradition, educating students from Years 7 to 10. Berne is a Special school which educates students who are not coping in a mainstream setting and present with a variety of needs which include behavioural, social, emotional, mental, sensory and learning challenges. Children from families who are prepared to support Catholic ideals and principles may

be considered eligible for enrolment. Priority is given to referrals from Catholic schools; however, special consideration may be given to individual cases from other school systems. The essential factor in offering a position at the school is whether the environment and philosophy can contribute to the child's development, assisting them to address the behavioural, emotional or social challenges they face.

There must be hope that Berne can make a difference in the child's life. If not, there is a risk of contributing to another failure that will further erode the young person's esteem. Enrolments are managed by the Principal and overseen by the Enrolment Team.

The school's full set of policies can be found on its official website.

Policies | The John Berne School

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

The theory that underpins the practice of all staff at The John Berne School is drawn from St Marcellin Champagnat and his belief in teaching and nurturing those who were most vulnerable and in need. The essence of our work at The John Berne School is lifting young people up so that they can expand their horizons and find their own place in the world. At the core of belonging to a community is having self respect and respect for others as well as being a responsible member of a group.

Our pedagogical approach centers on the importance of establishing connections and forming relationships founded on mutual respect and responsibility. Staff encourage students to participate positively in group activities at recess and lunch such as touch football, basketball, soccer, tennis and handball as well as playing pool and ping pong games. Staff encourage respect and responsibility and form positive relationships through their own participation and modelling. We also adopt a restorative justice approach to conflict resolution which fosters respect and understanding between individuals.

During Term 1 students had an assembly and completed class based activities around the topic of bullying. This is in line with The John Berne School values of creating a culture where we all share a responsibility in not accepting intimidation or bullying, but rather promoting a culture of care and understanding. Stage 5 students also attended a camp in Bundeena in the Royal National Park, to foster teamwork, self-confidence, positive attitudes and an awareness of the needs and abilities of others. Stage 4 students went out on activities to discover new challenges and learn to be respectful during new experiences in the community.

During Term 2 students had an assembly based on Reconciliation Week and the theme “Bridging Now to Next”. We also organised a LOL Day (Love of Learning Day) with a focus on Mathematics in Daily Life, students completed a round robin of activities in areas of Cooking, Science, Games, Art, Music and Sport. Students worked in their Pastoral Care Groups which provided a valuable opportunity for students to work together in the various team building activities. Stage 5 students also attended a camp in Jervis Bay, to provide them with the space to reflect on and modify their behaviours and attitudes through physical challenges and experiences in non-urban environments which many students have had little or no exposure to. These camps teach valuable life skills and help with socialisation and improve peer relations. Stage 4 students went on excursions and activities throughout the term to expose them to new experiences and develop a sense of respect and camaraderie amongst students.

During Term 3 students participated in a LOL Day (Love of Learning Day) with Learning a New Skill as the focus. In their Pastoral Care Groups students participated in learning new skills in the areas of Fishing,

Cooking, Drama, Chess and Magic. This encourages students to foster a growth mindset when it comes to approaching new things and trying new skills in different settings. It also improved peer to peer and peer to staff relationships as knowledge was shared. Selected students across Stage 5 attended snow camp in Jindabyne where once again they were put outside their comfort zone and had to develop a sense of responsibility while out in the elements.

In Term 4 students participated in a White Ribbon Day assembly to raise awareness about important issues in our society and encourage conversations around social issues in order to promote respect and responsibility for those with visible and invisible signs of hardship. Stage 4 students once again went out on activities where they continued to forge relationships based on mutual respect with fellow staff and students.

The John Berne School promotes attendance as some students are disengaged with school and this impacts on their learning. In order to encourage students to take responsibility for getting themselves to school we run an attendance and punctuality raffle, rewarding students with a raffle ticket for each day they attend and are on time. On the last day of each term, a winner is drawn.

Each term Stage 5 students attend a work experience placement where they learn to be respectful and responsible in the workplace. They are also required to complete at least one work experience at a charity of their choice to encourage them to be more socially responsible individuals who assist those in need.

In addition to this a selection of students across all year levels attended the Winds of Change Sailing Program. This was attended by a variety of students over parts of term 2, 3 and 4. This program was extremely beneficial in that it taught students the skills of how to navigate a yacht on the harbour and how to work together as a team to man the boat. It was also a wonderful experience for students who have never before had the opportunity to explore Sydney Harbour and gain even more appreciation for the city in which they live. In addition, the students were required to sail with people of different ages, life experiences and disabilities which gave them greater insight into being kind and treating others with respect despite their differences.

School Improvement

Key Improvements Achieved in 2025

1. Strengthened an invitational and inclusive approach to evangelisation and Marist Spirituality across the school community through meaningful faith experiences, student engagement, and community participation.
2. Successfully implementing a school-wide pedagogical framework that enhanced literacy, numeracy, and student engagement across all learning areas.
3. Creating a comprehensive school-wide Professional Learning Plan that supported staff growth, collaboration, and ongoing professional excellence.
4. Developed and strengthened partnerships with education systems (Sydney Catholic Schools) and tertiary institutions (Australian Catholic University), creating valuable opportunities for collaboration, innovation, and student pathways.
5. Expanded fundraising initiatives and significantly increased community awareness and engagement through targeted events, communication strategies, and collaborative partnerships.

Priority Key Improvements for 2026

The following are key improvements prioritised for 2026

1. Enhance an invitational and innovative approach to evangelisation, Catholic identity, and Marist spirituality for staff, students and parents.
2. Create a unifying “Berne Learning Statement” that clearly articulates how teaching, learning, and assessment work in the context of The John Berne School.
3. Ensure all students, especially new enrolments, have clear, data-informed Personal Plans (PPs) that guide individual support, funding, and learning pathways.

4. Broaden and deepen partnerships with Catholic agencies, the Advisory Council, the Foundation Board and broader community groups, to enhance student wellbeing and future pathways.
5. Create a school-wide approach co-designed by staff, students and parents that lifts engagement and outcomes in Key Learning Areas.

Stakeholder Satisfaction

Community Satisfaction

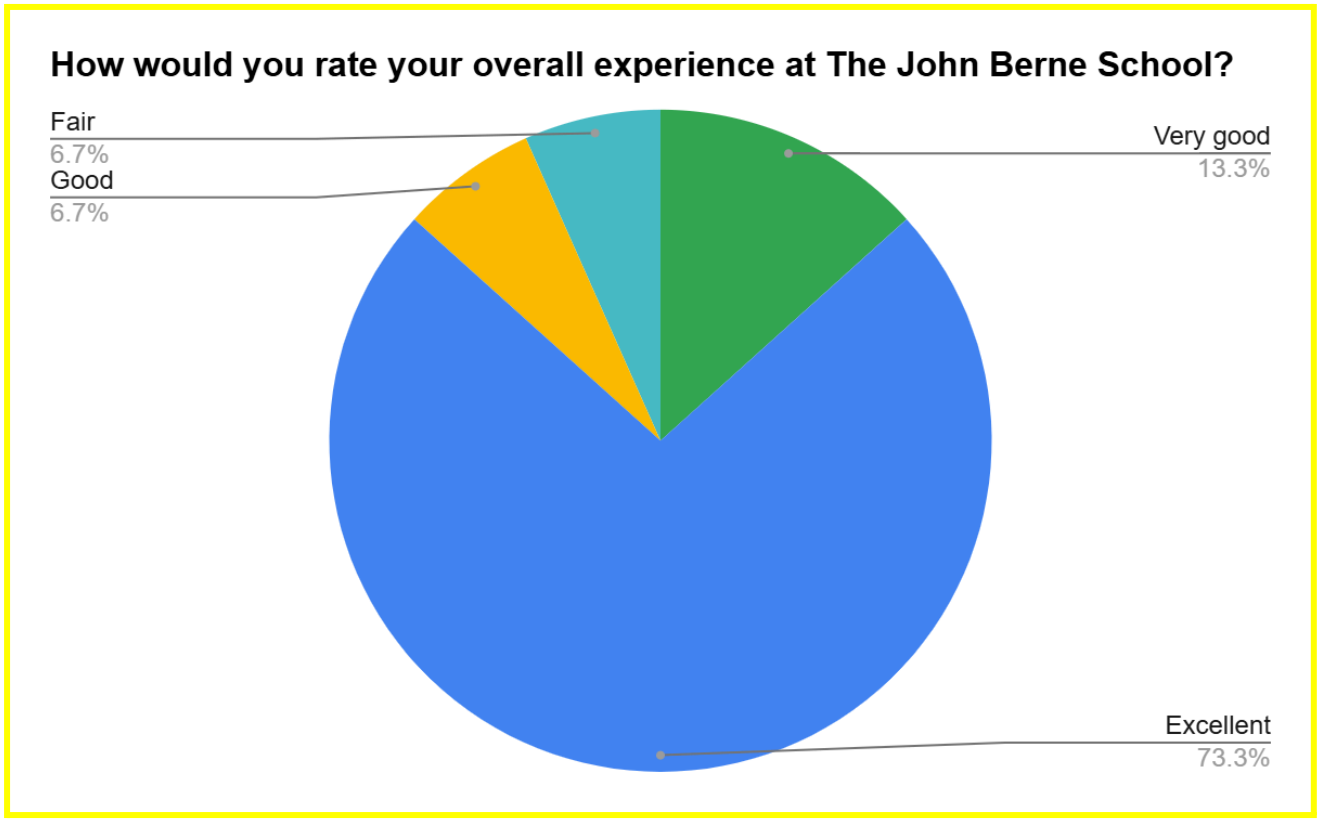
The opinions and ideas of parents, students and teachers are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students.

Parent Satisfaction

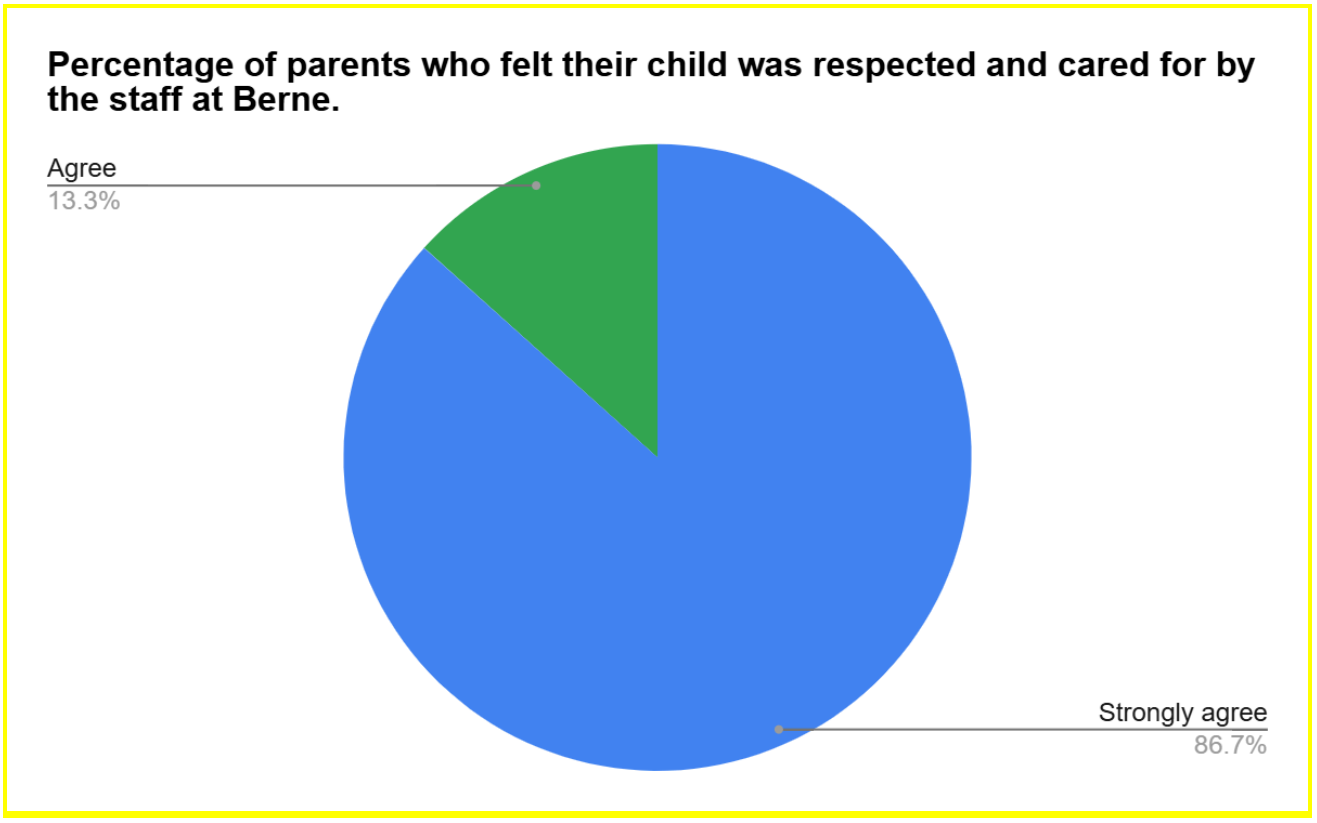
The John Berne School maintains a consistently high level of communication with parents and carers to facilitate a combined effort towards achieving the best outcomes for students and to gauge parent satisfaction. This communication is conducted with regular telephone calls, individual meetings and formal parent/staff strategic planning meetings each term.

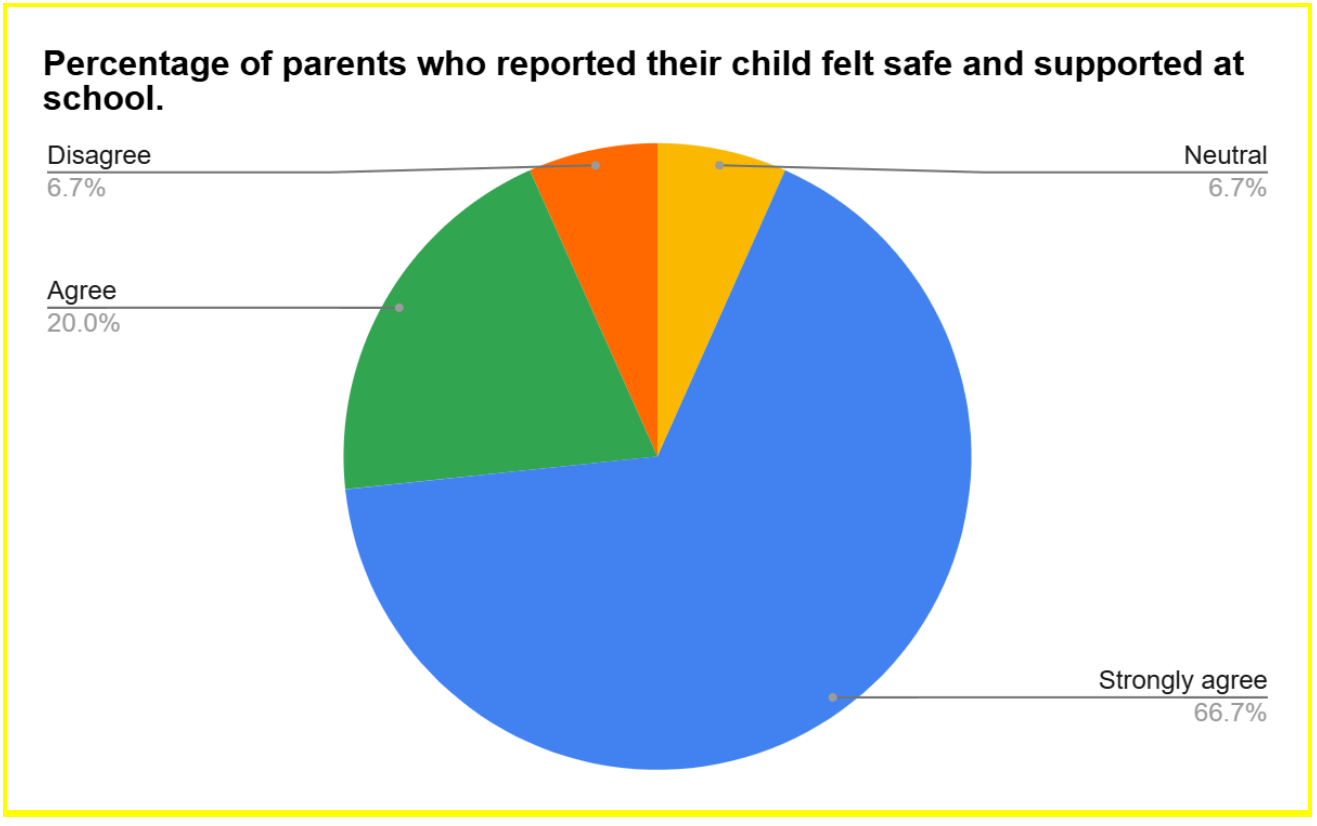
Following our 2025 Year 10 Graduation Ceremony, we reached out to parents and carers to gather their reflections on their family's journey at Berne. The brief survey provided us with meaningful insight into our strengths as a school and the areas where we can further enhance our support for students and families. We are sincerely grateful for the honest and thoughtful feedback shared by our Berne community, as it plays an important role in shaping the school's ongoing growth and development. A summary of the responses is presented in the charts and comments below.

Overall Experience:

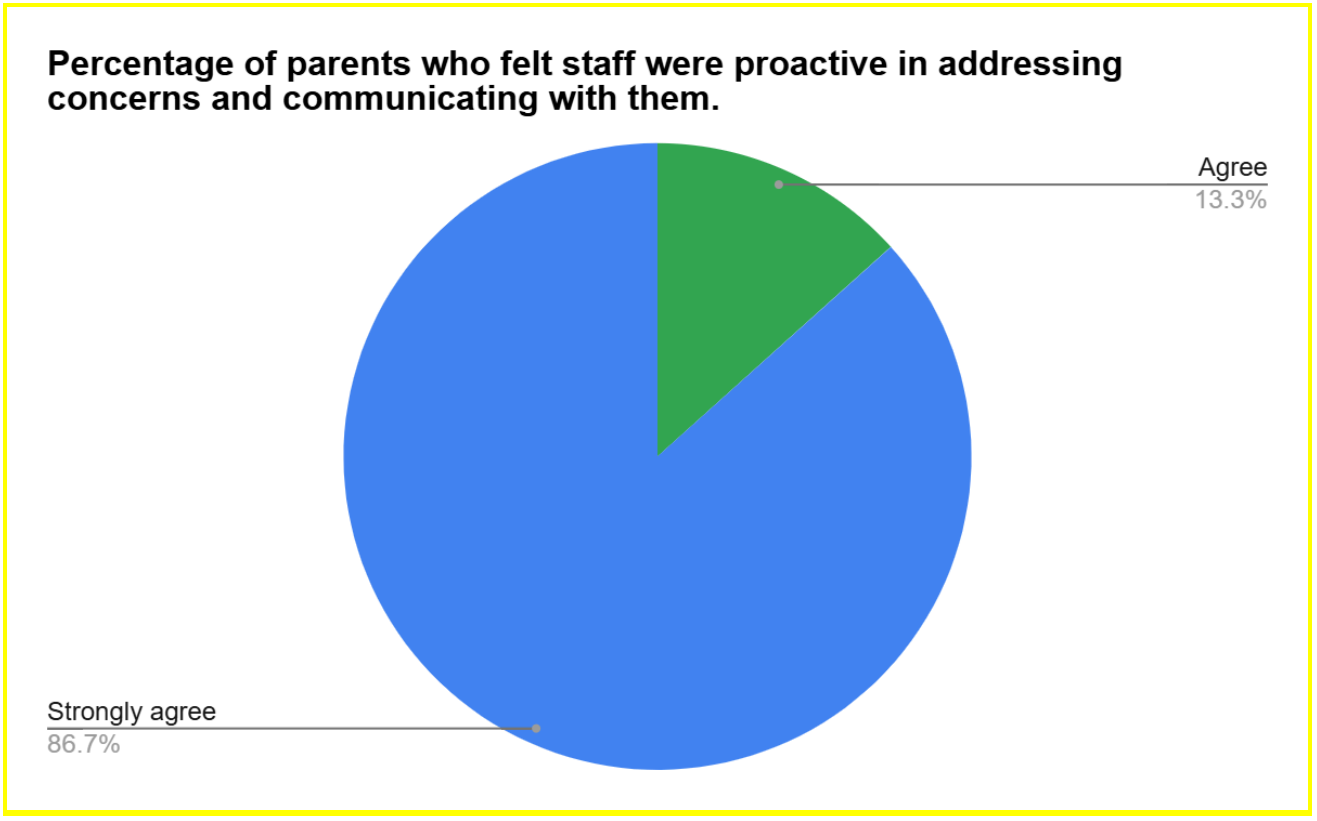


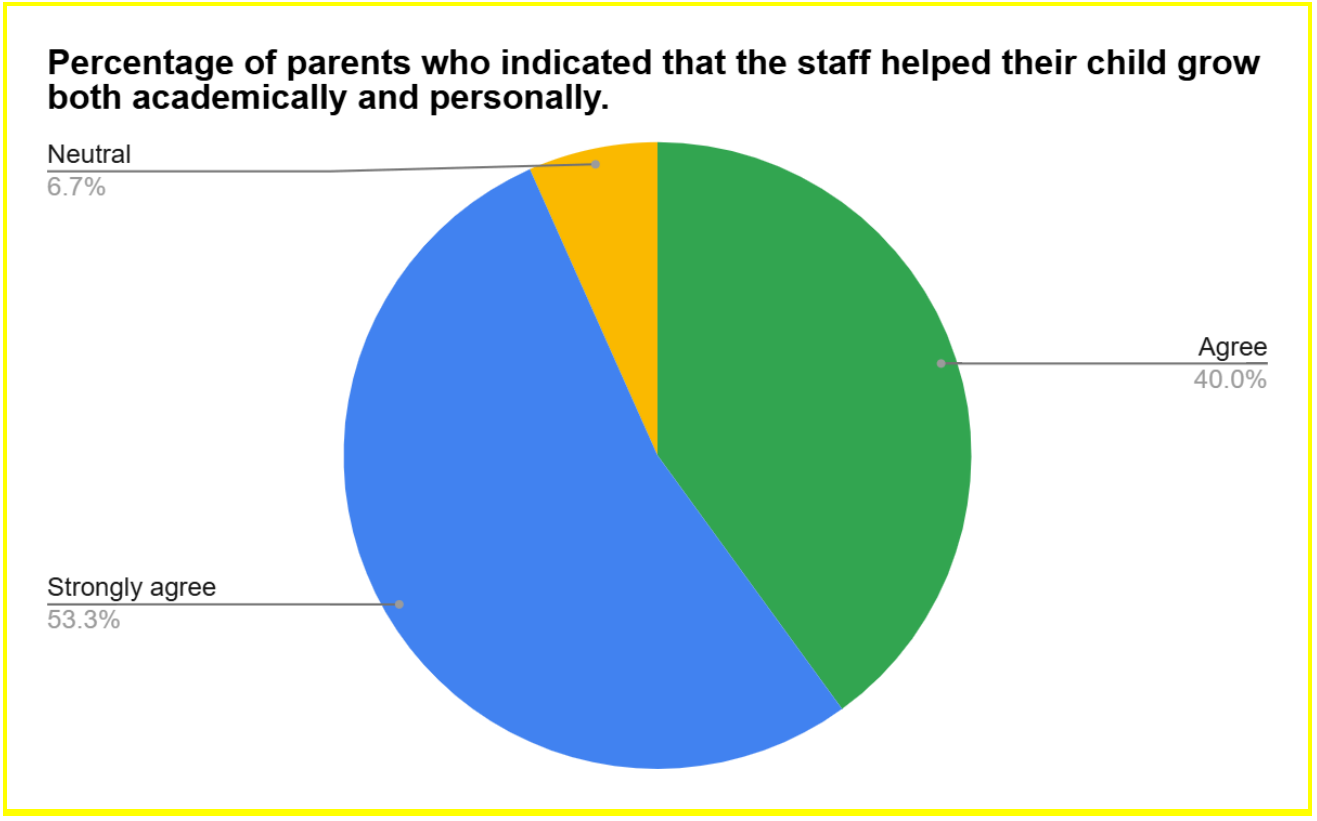
School Environment:



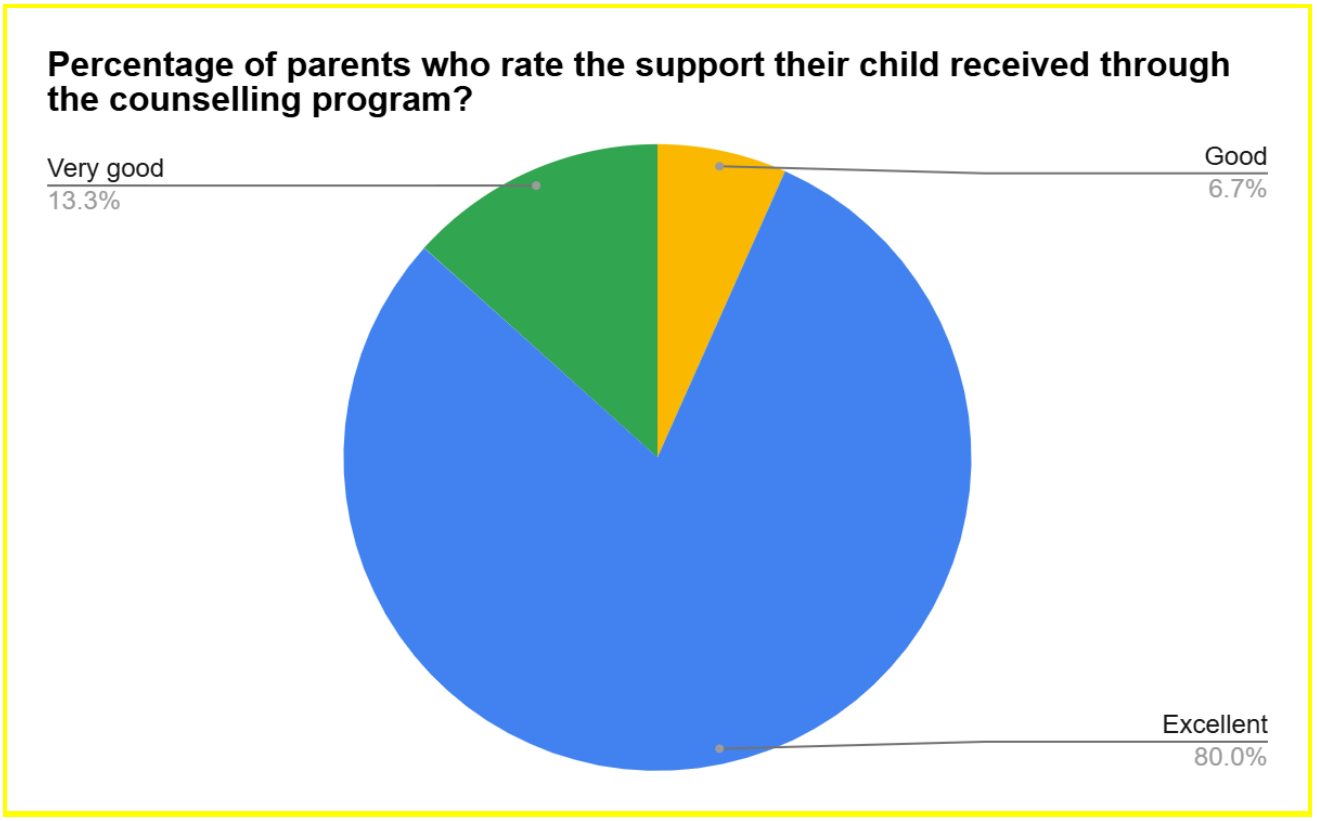


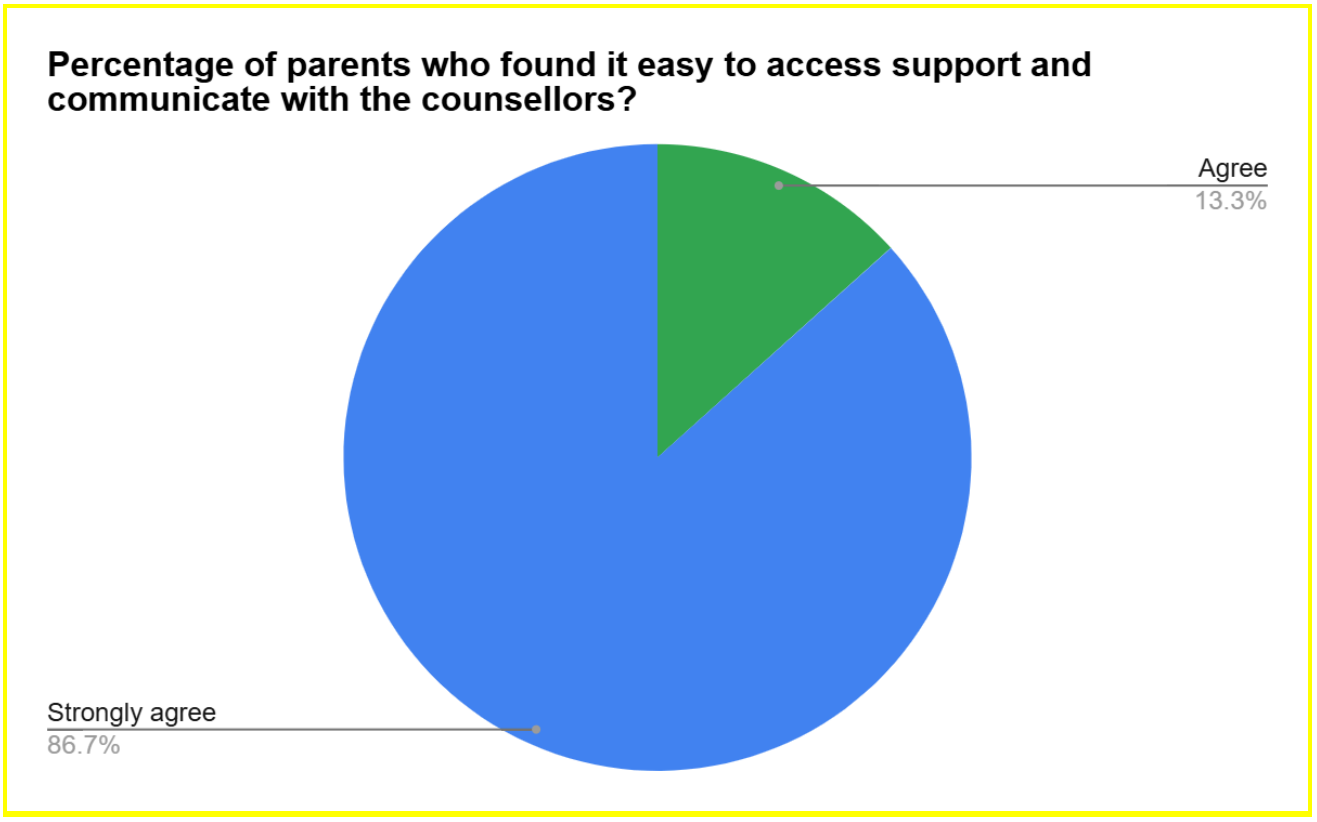
Staff and Communication:



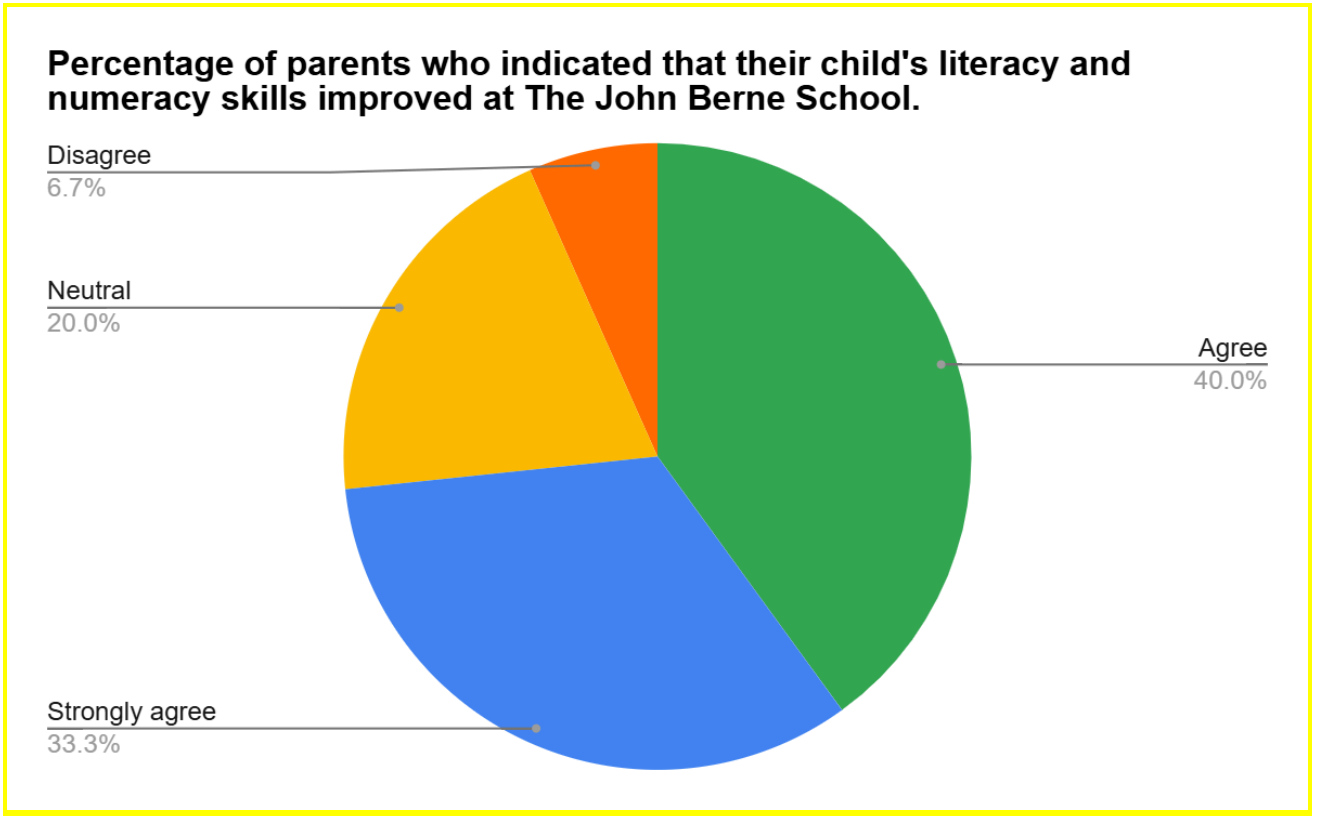


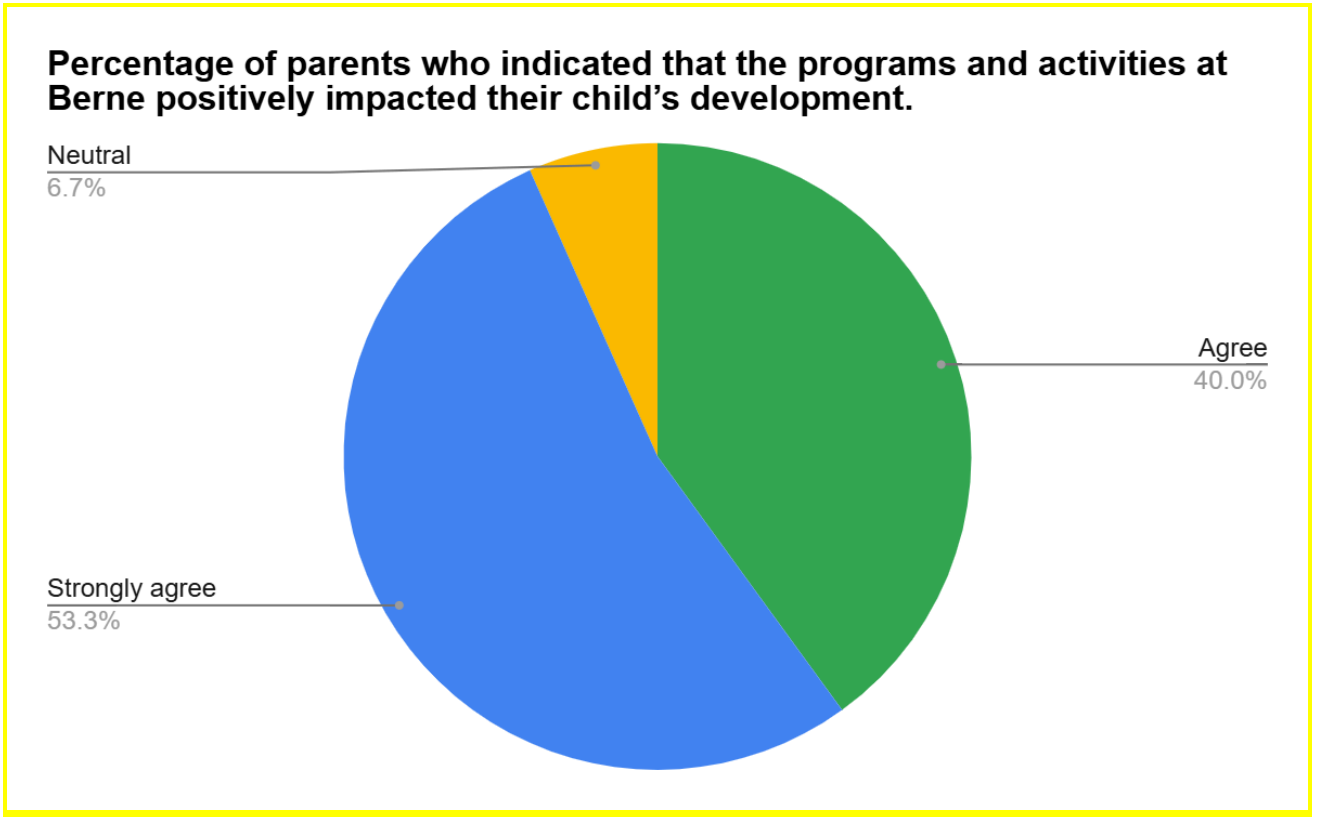
Counselling and Support Services:





Curriculum and Programs:





Final Thoughts and Recommendations:

What do you feel were the most beneficial aspects of your child's time at The John Berne School?

- Social interaction with kids of different backgrounds and culture.
- My child learned the necessary life skills which he improved each year. He realises his shortfalls and has learned how to manage them. I am so grateful for this school because I don't think he would have been successful at mainstream. My heartfelt gratitude to James and to the teachers, counsellors and all at Berne. You all come highly recommended. Thank you!
- The support and encouragement for the students and families. Always patient and available to address any concerns. The belief that each kid is entitled to support and encouragement in their student experience.
- Flexibility afforded to my son, patience, support and understanding.
- The overall support for the student and the personalised plan for him.
- The whole process and philosophy of the John Berne School from teachers to counsellors to administrative and career advisers that were involved and supported him was amazing .Thank you all again.
- The staff were amazing. Always trying to help and really went out of their way. Unfortunately he chose not to accept help and attend school most of the time.
- They never gave up on him, and kept him on the right side of the system.
- The exceptional academic, emotional and educational support he received throughout his time at JBS.
- The overall support from everyone. Can't thank everyone enough.
- The staff, not just any staff but the right staff. Staff that have compassion, empathy, care, patience, kindness and joy! Allowing my son the room to have the expression to be himself, to turn up as he is. He was going through so much, when he walked into the doors of John Berne. The incredible staff met my son where he was at. No judgement, just lots of warmth, compassion and care. They accommodated his mental health, guided us through ADHD needs without judgement and his well being, adjusting his learning needs to be flexible. They created a safe place for him to be, the small classes as well as encouragement to keep trying to do his best with his education needs, rebuilding his confidence. The work experience education incorporated into education had also been very beneficial. As a parent, the hope found at this school and the way that the teacher's model Christ's Love, Hope, Faith, Compassion believing that every child, God has a plan and purpose for their lives,i is what my son received here. From the reception ladies to all staff and vice and the principal, as a parent I truly couldn't be more thankful for this school. To watch my son graduate year 10 is an absolute miracle! I'm so grateful that he encountered John Berne School when we did. It's a life

saving school!

- The small class sizes, access to counsellors, caring educators and the rower experience program.
- A lack of judgement and genuine care, the regular Psychology support & the excellent role models in the teachers and all staff.
- Our son developed a deep dissatisfaction with attending mainstream school, compounded by ongoing challenges around guidance, boundaries, and expectations at home. When he began at The John Berne School, he continued to experience difficulties with attendance and some behavioral issues, both at school and at home. Despite this, we always felt supported by the school. The care, patience, and persistence shown by the staff meant a great deal to us. We are genuinely grateful that the team continued to stand by him, even during periods when his attendance was extremely poor. Your support played a significant part in helping him reach graduation, and we cannot thank you enough. For us, the most beneficial aspects were the school's consistent compassion, its structured but understanding approach, and the strong relationships staff built with him. The environment at John Berne provided him with stability, emotional support, and a sense of being genuinely seen and cared for. The tailored approach to his needs—academically, socially, and emotionally—made a profound difference and gave him the space to grow at a pace he could manage. Thank you again to all the staff for your dedication, kindness, and the positive impact you've had on his life. We deeply appreciate everything you have done.

Do you have any suggestions for how we can improve our support for students and families in the future?

- Keep going the way you are.
- The support we received was outstanding, and any suggestions come from a place of gratitude and wanting to ensure other families experience the same positive impact we did.
- Keep doing the work you're doing, advancing in every thing you're already doing! There is no other school like John Berne that provides young people in need the support, resources and the STAFF to grow, feel accepted, heard, seen and to thrive! God bless all at John Berne.
- Whilst we have always supported the pastoral care decisions, at times we felt there was too quick a response to send our son home from camp. It felt the decisions were reactionary and made a bigger deal about some issues instead of working on the issue at camp. The need to send him home from camp seemed to be the easy option at the time, and not help our son understand what was wrong with his behaviour and provide an opportunity to reflect and grow on camp, rather than be sent home immediately.
- I find it difficult to find any fault; I'm so grateful for John Berne and the care given.
- Continue the great work that you do to give those kids that can fall through educational cracks a

fighting chance to succeed.

- Just keep doing what you are doing, and THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING.
- No, I think the school did as much as they could to support my son and this is much appreciated.

Student Satisfaction

At the conclusion of Year 10, students are invited to provide a statement about their experience of and satisfaction with the school. Comments made by the Year 10 graduating class of 2025 are shown below.

- Berne helped me to get work experience, and this has been the highlight of my stay here.
- The teachers here connect with you on a personal level.
- This is a school where I feel comfortable because it is smaller and the people are nice.
- Calling teachers by their first names was a good way to connect.
- My work experience has led me to think about bigger things.
- The familiarity with everyone at school and the teachers, I will miss the most.
- What I also like about Berne is that it is a small school with fewer students.
- The teachers have always been helpful whenever I have been faced with challenges.
- I will miss the natural environment of the school.
- The personal counselling sessions have helped me to improve.
- My attendance has improved.

Teacher Satisfaction

Teacher satisfaction continues to be a cornerstone of our school's success in 2025, with staff feedback throughout the year remaining exceptionally positive. The Principal's collaborative and inclusive leadership style has strengthened a culture of unity, trust, and shared purpose across the school community. By encouraging staff participation in decision-making processes and welcoming innovative ideas, leadership has fostered an environment where teachers feel respected, valued, and empowered to contribute meaningfully to the ongoing growth of the school.

A defining strength of our school community is its stability, reflected in consistently low staff turnover. This is a testament to the supportive and nurturing environment cultivated by school leadership. The Principal remains deeply committed to the wellbeing of all staff members, providing regular opportunities for individual support and maintaining a compassionate and approachable presence. As a result, teachers feel secure in their roles and experience a strong sense of belonging, collegiality, and professional fulfilment within the school.

Professional learning and growth have also remained a significant focus throughout 2025. Staff have been encouraged and supported to engage in ongoing professional development through both external training

opportunities and in-house initiatives. This commitment to continuous improvement, combined with a positive and respectful workplace culture, reinforces our school as a community where educators thrive professionally and remain inspired to deliver the highest quality learning experiences for students and the wider school community.

Financial Statement

The financial position of The John Berne School has been audited by V.J. Ryan & Co Chartered Accountants.

Marists Schools Australia Limited

Trading as The John Berne School

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the Year Ended 31 December 2025

	2025 $	2024 $
REVENUE		
Tuition and other services	229,331	222,433
Government Grants and Donations	2,640,860	2,350,287
Non-Government Grants	154,208	108,971
Interest Income	67,147	72,089
Other Income	100,738	48,304
TOTAL REVENUE	**3,192,284**	**2,802,084**
EXPENDITURE		
Employee Benefit Expenses	(2,714,990)	(2,643,774)
Administration	(289,408)	(315,440)
Depreciation	(245,840)	(264,299)
Other School Services Expenses	(138,577)	(119,254)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**(3,388,815)**	**(3,342,767)**
(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	**(196,531)**	**(540,683)**
INCOME TAX EXPENSE	-	-
DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	**(196,531)**	**(540,683)**
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		
Items that may be reclassified subsequently to Profit or Loss: Increase in Reserves	-	-
Items that will not be reclassified to Profit or Loss	-	-
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE PERIOD	**(196,531)**	**(540,683)**

Supporters of The John Berne School

The John Berne School relies on the generosity of others to help us provide services to young people entrusted into our care and their families. This generosity comes from many different sources in the community, including government, clubs, companies and other organisations, including:

2aspire Business Solutions;
Bullant Sports Pty Ltd;
Burwood RSL Club;
Canterbury Hurlstone Park RSL Club;
Carroll & O'Dea Lawyers;
Catholic Women's League, Summer Hill;
Catholic Schools NSW;
Club Ashfield;
Commonwealth Bank of Australia;
Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club;
EBP Sports Club;
Fugen Constructions;
Holy Family Education, Petersham;
Life Pharmacy Group
Making Waves Foundation;
Marie Byrne Scholarship;
Marist Brothers Australia;
Marist Schools Australia Limited;
Open Ground;
Sidgreaves & Co;
St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill;
St Thomas Becket Parish, Lewisham;
Sydney Catholic Schools;
Sydney Opera House Creative Learning;
V.J. Ryan & Co Chartered Accountants;
West Tigers Unite Harmony Program.

We are very grateful for the support of our many volunteers. It would not be possible to achieve everything we do at this school if it weren't for the valued assistance of our volunteers, who help us in so many ways. We also acknowledge the generous support of the members of The John Berne School Advisory Council and The John Berne School Foundation Board.

The John Berne School would like to acknowledge and thank the many work experience host employers who generously gave their time and shared their knowledge with our students.

Thank you also to all those individuals who provided financial support and assistance throughout the year. This financial and moral support is deeply appreciated by The John Berne School staff, students and their families.