



The John Berne School

Annual School Report to the Community 2023

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Principal

Mr James Le Huray

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 www.thejohnberneschool.org.

PRINCIPAL: James Le Huray

DATE: 30th June, 2024

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

I am pleased to write a few paragraphs as the preface to The John Berne School (Berne) Annual Report for 2023. It is with great pleasure that I reflect upon a successful year at our school. We continue to uphold the principles of our Catholic Faith and we are proud of the ways in which we have seen our students grow both spiritually and intellectually.

I would like to publicly acknowledge the dedication of the staff to the students of Berne and especially thank them for educating and caring for them in the spirit of the Marist Brothers, whose ethos forms the foundation for Berne culture.

Enrolments this year were consistent with 2022 averaging 42 students. At the year's end we farewelled our Year 10 students all of whom attained a Record of School Achievement (RoSA) and welcomed many new students into the school.

As we look towards the future, we remain committed to ensuring that our school serves as a beacon of hope and faith for years to come. The John Berne School is a place where all students are welcomed, nurtured and supported regardless of their background or beliefs, and where the principles of our faith provide a solid foundation for their future success.

I am most grateful to all in our school community who have contributed to the school's many successes in 2023 and express my deep appreciation and gratitude for the continued support of the Marist Brothers and Marist Schools Australia.

May God's blessings be upon you, and may He continue to guide us on this journey of faith and learning.

Hope Always.

James Le Huray
Principal
The John Berne School

SCHOOL FEATURES

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 educating 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 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 an additional withdrawal schedule is drawn up 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 assessment and evaluation of students ensures that our program is effective for them and our internal data shows that students who successfully complete the reading program see significant improvements.

Alternative Activities

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: Guide Dogs Association; Sailors with DisABILITIES and West Tigers Unite Harmony Program.

Breakfast Program

At the end of a sometimes long journey to school from all parts of Sydney, students need a good breakfast. Our Breakfast Program not only meets the nutritional needs of students, but in sharing this meal together each day, with adult care and supervision, students have the opportunity to settle before classes begin and improve their social skills.

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

Each term, students participate in a wide range of activities including day outings and longer camps which take into consideration the ability levels of students and are structured to extend them. The Outdoor Education Program is an integral part of our curriculum and helps build resilience, teamwork, tolerance, gratitude and independence. Some activities include sailing, swimming, canoeing, hiking, bike riding and snow sports. The program schedule is flexible to enable adjustments according to students' individual needs and capabilities and also allow for weather conditions.

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 also 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.

STUDENT PROFILE

STUDENT ENROLMENT

The School caters for students in Years 7 – 10. Students attending this School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities from all over the greater Sydney region. The following information describes the student profile for 2023:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
10	32	4	42

** Language background other than English*

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 a 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 Committee.

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 <https://www.thejohnberneschool.org/enrolment/> A visit and tour of the school is welcomed by appointment.

An Enrolment Enquiry form is to be completed along with supporting documentation.

The Enrolment Counsellor gathers data from the previous school and family. A psychological assessment may also be required before making a decision about the child's appropriateness for Berne. This data is presented to the Principal for consideration.

Parents and carers are interviewed by the Principal before an enrolment is finalised. The documents required at the interview include the child's Birth Certificate and immunisation records. A passport, with documents

validating the child's current VISA status, is also necessary if the child does not hold Australian citizenship. Previous school reports, reports from medical practitioners, psychologist reports and any relevant medical records are also required.

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 enroll at Berne and the student and student's family understand the mission, ethos and methods 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 the 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. Our enrolment policy is available on our website <https://www.thejohnberneschool.org/enrolment/>

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 and methods. Every effort is made by staff to assist students in making the most of the opportunities provided to 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 children at the School.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATES

The average student attendance rate for 2023 was 65.13%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Year 7	77.12%
Year 8	63.15%
Year 9	64.50%
Year 10	65.25%

MANAGING STUDENT NON-ATTENDANCE

The John Berne School is a Special 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 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 on 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 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 relating to the Year 10 student cohort. 16 students graduated from Year 10 from The John Berne School in 2023. At the end of February 2024, graduating students from 2023 (who completed the full range of programs at school) are represented as follows:

37% enrolled in Year 11 at another school

0% apprenticeship

19% enrolled in other education or training

19% engaged in employment

25% not engaged in education or employment or unable to be contacted

STAFFING PROFILE

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2023:

Total Teaching Staff*	Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander Teaching Staff	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
12	0	8	20

* This number includes 11.6 full-time equivalent teaching staff and 6.6 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 inservices, 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 2023, the staff at The John Berne School participated in a number of Professional Development opportunities.

Selected staff attended various inservices including:

- AIS Curriculum Reform
- AIS New Mathematics Syllabus
- AIS New English Syllabus
- Lawsense Risk Assessments for school excursions and camps
- Footsteps 2 - Marist Retreat
- Assistant Principals - Marist Conference

As a whole school, staff attended inservices including:

- Youth Mental Health First Aid
- DRS ABCD: First Aid and CPR Training

TEACHER STANDARDS

The following table sets out the number of teachers who fall into each of the four Australian Teaching Standards categories as accredited by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA):

Australian Teaching Standards		Number of Teachers
1	Provisional or conditionally classified teacher	0
2	Proficient teacher	12
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).

CATHOLIC IDENTITY AND MISSION

At Berne we welcome you to celebrate our Catholic identity and mission through this annual report. We embrace our Marist Catholic heritage as both a privilege and a responsibility, upholding the teachings of the gospel and our Catholic faith in all that we do.

Catholic life continues to flourish at The John Berne School with the community celebrating significant religious education days with Mass and celebrations on Champagnat Day (June 6) and John Berne Day (October 10). The presence of a Marist Brother on staff, gives great witness to the special connection that Marists have with the education of young people and the Religious Education classes continue to be an important means of reaching our young people.

In 2023 staff were invited to participate in spirituality programs such as “Footsteps” and encouraged to join the Marist Association to further gain insight into Marist Spirituality. School masses are held every term and at these masses, rituals have been established that have encouraged the community to reflect at a deeper level, with one of these rituals the lighting of the school candle.

It is however through the compassion and care of the staff, through their actions and empathy with our students that the true Gospel values are witnessed at Berne. The school motto of “Hope Always” is significant to the school and the wider community as it encapsulates the ethos and mission to which The John Berne School aspires.

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.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN NATIONAL TESTS

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 2023 and the average achieved in all Australian schools. Literacy is reported in four content strands (aspects): Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar. Numeracy is reported as a single content strand.

	Reading		Writing		Spelling		Grammar		Numeracy	
	School Mean	Aust. Mean	School Mean	Aust. Mean	School Mean	Aust. Mean	School Mean	Aust. Mean	School Mean	Aust. Mean
Year 9	462	564	495	567	524	568	447	557	514	568

The *My School* website <https://www.myschool.edu.au/> 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 2023, the number of Berne students issued with a RoSA was 16.

STUDENT WELFARE AND DISCIPLINE POLICIES

Pastoral Care

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.

Student Discipline

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 persons, 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 punishment).

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 anti-bullying. Staff have continued to update our anti-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 *Anti-Bullying Policy* is consistent with and based upon the National Framework for Safe Schools.

Our full policy can be found on our website at

<https://www.thejohnberneschool.org/about-us/policies/bullying-policy/>

Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy

The School's *Complaints Policy* and *Grievance Policy* are based upon procedural fairness and recognise 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.

The full text of the policy can be found on our public website at

<https://www.thejohnberneschool.org/about-us/policies/complaints-policy/>

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 No Way. 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 this term 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 and completed activities around Reconciliation Week. We also organised a LOL Day (Love of Learning Day) with a focus on Art and First Nations Culture. During this day students in their Pastoral Care Groups had the option of designing a new version of the Australian flag or to write a new National Anthem that was more inclusive of First Nations people. Stage 4 students also attended a camp this term 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 5 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 a PDH (Personal Development and Health) and Wellbeing focus. In their Pastoral Care Groups students created a set of keys to wellbeing after engaging in a number of round robin activities organised to facilitate self respect and wellbeing, giving them a tool kit to take with them into life outside of school. This encouraged students to think about how

they can improve relationships and promote respect to their peers and the world at large. It was an enjoyable day for students with a valuable message. This term selected students across Stage 5 attended snow camp 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 also attended a camp 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.

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 Guide Dog Program called Puppy Paws. This was attended by a variety of students over term 2, 3 and 4. This program was extremely beneficial in that it taught students the responsibilities involved in raising and training guide dogs with a view to these animals assisting people in the community with disabilities in the future. It also enabled students to gain a greater understanding and respect for animals in various stages of their development and assist them in progressing through a number of milestones. Students learnt valuable skills in their Puppy Paws journey towards becoming more respectful and responsible citizens.

KEY IMPROVEMENTS ACHIEVED IN 2023

1. Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) has been implemented and this collects and collates data informing the school of the impact The John Berne School has on student emotional growth/self esteem.
2. The school held two major fundraisers increasing awareness to our supporters and providing new opportunities for fundraising.
3. Leadership team reviews and leadership coaching have been embedded into practice at The John Berne School.
4. Promotion of the school has ensured there are increasing student enrolments and wait lists have been created.
5. Collection and collation of data has been aligned with Marist Schools Australia strategic direction with the school participating in a cyclic review

PRIORITY KEY IMPROVEMENTS FOR 2024

The following are key improvements prioritised for 2024

1. Participate in a Cyclic Review and create a new Strategic Plan for 2025-28 based on the findings.
2. Develop a new role with the school's administration team to increase awareness to our supporters and provide new opportunities for fundraising.
3. Use collated data to support best practice in the classroom.
4. Continue to promote the school with a view to increasing student enrolments and in particular target those students entering Stage 4.
5. Incorporate a hands-on and experiential approach to learning activities.

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 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 graduation ceremony parents were invited to complete a survey. 100% of parents who completed a survey in 2023 indicated that they had a high level of satisfaction with The John Berne School and would recommend the school to others. The survey asked parents to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the school and offer suggestions for improvement. Some of the comments made by parents were:

- “The staff went above and beyond for my children, helping with their Work Experience.”
- “Year 11 and 12 would be great but other than that, this school is amazing. Thank you!”
- “I can’t thank you enough to the whole Berne team. The care you gave my son is amazing.”
- “The school is just so much more than the sum of its parts. The staff, teachers, ethos, pastoral care all combine to be a safe, nurturing and supportive environment that we feel so grateful to have been a part of. It has been a gift to our son and us.”
- “A very good learning environment.”
- “What we like most about Berne is the passion that all the staff have and the caring and supportive environment that has been created here.”
- “We have valued the staff engagement and communication. The individualised programs, flexible timetables and friendly atmosphere.”
- “The small classroom sizes are great.”
- “The school should go through to Years 11 and 12.”
- “We have had such a positive experience at the school that we can’t think of any improvements. Don’t change anything.”

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 2023 are shown below.

- “Since coming to Berne, I have started coming to school more often. I have become more outgoing and social.”
- “The John Berne School has helped me gain confidence within myself.”
- “The teachers care about your education and mental health.”
- “I like that this is a small school with less people which makes it easier to bond with other peers.”
- “My favourite thing about Berne is the teachers and other staff members because they are very understanding.”
- “Since coming here, my reading has improved. The John Berne School has also helped me because I have been able to work with counsellors and speak to them when I need to.”
- “Before I came here, I rarely went to school.”
- “I think I have changed since coming to Berne. I don’t get in trouble as much as I used to and I come to school nearly all the time now.”
- “Berne is not like a normal school environment. I will miss that ... and the people.”
- “I haven’t missed a day of school this year and hardly ever get angry when people disagree with me.”
- “I will miss the teachers, they are pretty nice compared to other schools.”
- “This year I have come to school nearly every day.”
- “Berne has helped me with gaining lots of work experience and helped me get a part time job.”
- “I really enjoyed going to the snow camp. It was a good opportunity for me because I wouldn’t have gone to the snow if it were not for The John Berne School.”
- “Since coming to Berne, my mental health has improved a lot thanks to the counsellors, teachers, my friends and the smaller learning environment.”
- “My counsellors have helped me through some rough times, which I am appreciative of.”
- “My view of school has changed because of all the good, fun vibes that are here. It’s never boring at Berne.”
- “I will miss pretty much everything about Berne.”
- “Since coming to The John Berne School, my social skills have improved and my confidence has gotten better.”
- “I probably would have dropped out in Year 9 if I did not come to this school.”
- “I like Berne because it is way more flexible than regular school.”
- “Coming to Berne has helped me a lot.”
- “During my time here, I have been able to improve my ability to read and write. I am better at staying

on task and completing my work. Another thing that Berne has helped me with is that I now have better ways to calm myself down when I am angry.”

- “The reason why I like this school is because the teachers listen to you.”
- “The John Berne School has helped me with my learning, including things such as my spelling and reading.”
- “I don’t think I’ll ever be able to forget gardening with Michael and then later eating our produce.”
- “I’m not sure where I would be if I didn’t attend Berne.”
- “I wouldn’t be the person I am now without this school.”
- “Berne has helped me regain hope that I’m not just a bad kid.”

TEACHER SATISFACTION

The John Berne School is a positive and collaborative work environment promoting open communication and recognises and rewards teacher achievements. The Principal conducts a full staff meeting weekly where staff have the opportunity to raise any concerns, discuss wellbeing as well as monitor their level of satisfaction. It is important to note that in the previous two years there has been minimal turnover of staff.

The Principal provides opportunities for ongoing training and resources for teachers to enhance their skills and knowledge. At the end of each school year the Principal meets individually with each staff member and they are invited to respond to a series of questions. These meetings have been overwhelmingly positive and constructive.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The financial position of The John Berne School has been audited by VJ Ryan Chartered Accountants.

The John Berne School
Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income
For the Year ended 31 December 2023

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
REVENUE		
Tuition and other services	223,333	200,462
Government Grants and Donations	2,269,397	2,316,637
Non Government Grants	168,828	178,087
Interest Income	18,119	3,666
Other Income	83,302	62,142
TOTAL REVENUE	2,762,979	2,760,994
EXPENDITURE		
Employee Benefit Expenses	(2,112,222)	(1,929,821)
Administration	(326,666)	(263,926)
Depreciation	(243,323)	(251,979)
Other School Services Expenses	(158,335)	(126,987)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	(2,840,546)	(2,572,713)
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	(77,567)	188,281
INCOME TAX EXPENSE	-	-
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	(77,567)	188,281
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	(77,567)	188,281

SUPPORTERS OF THE JOHN BERNE SCHOOL

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

2aspire Business Solutions;
Anderson Event Consulting;
Ashfield RSL Club;
Bobak Pty Ltd;
Bullant Sports Pty Ltd;
Canterbury Hurlstone Park RSL Club;
Carroll & O’Dea Lawyers;
Catholic Schools NSW;
Club Ashfield;
Commonwealth Bank of Australia;
Catholic Women’s League Summer Hill;
Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club;
Earlwood Bardwell Park RSL Club;
Fugen Constructions;
Guide Dogs NSW Positive Paws Project;
Herbert Street Foundation;
Holy Family Education Petersham;
Marie Byrne Scholarship;
Marist Brothers Australia;
Marist Schools Australia Limited;
Petersham RSL Club;
Pharmacy Phusion;
Sidgreaves & Co;
St Joseph’s College Hunters Hill;
St Thomas Becket Parish Lewisham;
Sydney Catholic Schools;
V.J. Ryan & Co Chartered Accountant;
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.

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

Thank you also to all those many 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.