

The Phoenix



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BERENGARRA SCHOOL NEWSLETTER—2016



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The Principal's report

Newsletter- Term 3, 2016

Term 3 is the term the average school finds the most difficult, with the winter blues hovering over classrooms spreading all sorts of lurgies, testing the resilience of all. However, not at Berengarra! This term we have welcomed eight new students to the school, we have improved communication between staff and parents by installing a parent portal on our webserver and we have started plans to expand the Box Hill program with the addition of an extra group, hopefully by the middle of next year.

The latter is the most exciting. This year the staff came to the realisation that for some of our students who were diagnosed with a condition called developmental trauma, our behavioural management model based on cognitive behaviour therapy had its limitations and warranted a different approach. Courtesy of the Department of Human Services the school engaged with a group called Knightlamp who specialized in this area. The result is that we have made small but significant changes in managing these students and they have been doing much better. However, we have concluded that we would be even more successful if we could establish a program separate to the current Box Hill program to avoid any conflict with our current behavioural management practices, as they have proven to be successful with most of our students.

The School Council is now exploring the possibility of leasing some rooms in the old primary school behind the Box Hill site, fitting them out and running a program based on Nurture Group principles in the UK. I don't believe any school in Australia is running a program like this, so I am declaring another first for Berengarra if it goes ahead! Our school counsellor, Marianne Wray, is the driving force behind this project and if things go well we could start the group as early as 2nd term next year. It will also enable us to increase enrolments by up to ten students, which is very important now we are at full capacity and have a small waiting list. Watch this space.

Internet

As a result of our increased demand on the internet and deteriorating infrastructure in the Box Hill area we have seen a rapid decline in our internet service, so much so that staff regularly give up in despair and turn to their phones for a solution.

The NBN is not due in the area until 2018 (at least) so we have no choice but to install an optic fibre connection at a significant cost. This should be done by the start of next term, and now we have a parent and staff portal that delivers reports, email service, parts of the curriculum and other communication, it is not a choice - just a necessity of operating a school in 2016.

The Principal's report continued

Staff

At the end of this term we say farewell to Sheridan Mitchell, our English VCAL teacher at Pathways. She has been with us for just over two years and in that time she has delivered our VCAL program with great passion. It is second time around for Sheridan at Berengarra as she was our Woodwork teacher from 2000-2004, so we wish her well. She will always be a Berengarra “true believer”.

Also, this term we appointed one of our youth workers, Claire McIntyre to a two days per week counselling position at Pathways to provide extra support for our most needy students.

Finally.....

Time for a break. Stay safe and we will see you all next term.

Pete

Parent Survey reminder

Thank you to all parents that have completed the survey. For all those that are yet to, please follow the link below.

Parent Satisfaction Survey – open until the first week of term 4, 7th October

<http://research.is.vic.edu.au/index.php?r=survey/index/sid/848133/lang/en>

Parent Portal reminder

All Box Hill student reports will now be on the Portal please login using the link below and the username and passwords that have been emailed to you. It will come up with a certificate warning so you will need to use the advanced options to get to the Parent portal. Thomas our IT man has made sure the server is secure.

<https://webserver/Swift/Account/LogOn>

Term Dates 2016

2016 - 4th TERM

staff return - October 3th

Students return - October 4th

Box Hill Camp - November 16th /17th

Pupil Free Day Box Hill - November 18th

Pathways Camp- November 21st/22nd/23rd

Mid term break - October 31st - November 1st (Cup Day)

Pathways Breakup - November 25th

Box Hill Breakup December 7th - 12.30 pm

Box Hill Parent/Teacher interviews - December, 8th—9th

staff finish - December 14th

