

The Phoenix



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BERENGARRA SCHOOL NEWSLETTER—2016



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The Principal's report

Graduation

In the past few weeks it has been my privilege to attend the graduation ceremonies at both campuses. At the conclusion of each I sat back and could only admire the outstanding achievements of the students. The Pathways Program had its most successful year, with thirteen students receiving their Foundation or Intermediate VCAL certificates, more than double the number of last year. At Box Hill, twelve students were ready to move on, five to Pathways, five to mainstream school and two to learning centres. By any measure we have had our most successful year. I would like to thank all the staff for their dedication and commitment in making this happen, and also to the parents and care givers who have maintained faith and support in their child despite the difficult journey.

Despite so many students moving on, enrolments are very strong for next year. At the time of writing there are only two vacancies at each campus, which is a testament to our growing reputation in the education community.

Killara Street Program

Developmental trauma is the result of early life abuse and/or neglect and **significantly impacts on the young person's ability to effectively engage in education.** In particular, developmental trauma results in severe difficulties building and maintaining effective relationships with peers and teachers. Also, young people from this background have frequent difficulty with emotion regulation, resulting in challenging behaviour that requires specialist knowledge in a modified setting if positive educational outcomes are to be realised.

In second term DHHS provided the school with some resources to assist one of their clients who was not doing well. The Knight Lamp group, who specialise in assisting students who have experienced

The Principal's report— continued

developmental trauma, ran three workshops for the staff and also supplied an assistant for the child. What emerged from this was that the current behaviour management practices at Berengarra have some shortcomings when dealing with children in this category and they would benefit from a different approach. The staff believe this could be best achieved by running a dedicated program at a separate venue. Last week the School Council agreed and they have given the green light for a new program, The Killara Street Program.

We have negotiated with St Francis Xavier Parish for the use of an area in the old primary school behind the Box Hill campus and a lease should be signed by next week. Plans to renovate the rooms have already been drawn up, a builder has been engaged and with any luck we should be ready to go by 2nd term next year. Our counsellor, Marianne Wray, has done an enormous amount of research into the project, which includes not only ideas on behaviour management and curriculum, but also on room design, furniture and colour schemes. We will be basing the program on the Berry Street Education Model which embraces nurture principles.

Internet

I hope you noticed the speed this newsletter was delivered. Yes, we now have a fibre optic connection to the internet, with download and upload speeds consistently ten times what they were in the past. So from now on there will be no more grizzles and complaints from the students and staff (I wish!).

Lyn and Cheryl

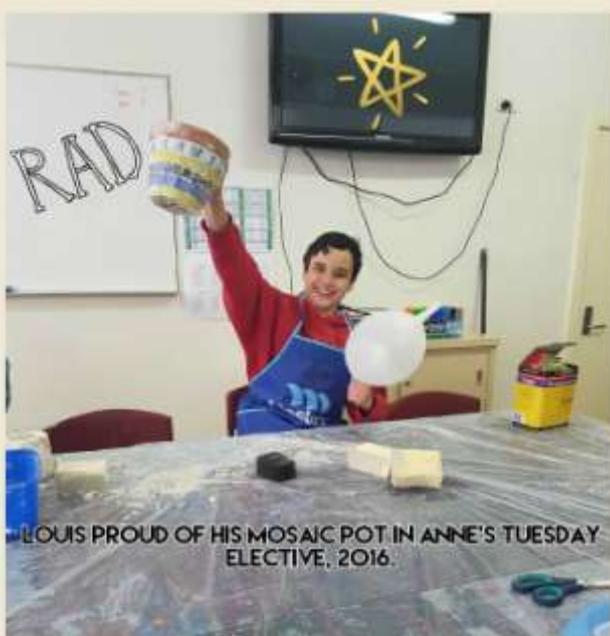
Last week the staff acknowledged 21 years of service by Lyn Perry and Cheryl Vickers. Lyn started in 1995, and in that time she filled the positions of food technology teacher and special education teacher. Her dedication and commitment to the students, and her ability to always put a positive spin on a difficult situation has been the hallmark of her contribution to the school. Cheryl has also shown similar qualities. In addition she has filled a role that very few other staff have been able to do successfully, home group mother of our youngest students. I tried it one year and lasted a term! On behalf of the whole school community a huge thanks.

Finally, only one thing can be said at this time of year.....time for a break.

Pete



Talk to the Animals elective Altona foreshore, 2016



LOUIS PROUD OF HIS MOSAIC POT IN ANNE'S TUESDAY ELECTIVE, 2016.



Erza and Okan playing connect 4, 2016.



Having fun in maths 2016

ALICE, NURSING HARVEY, 2016



Outdoor Activities

As part of the 'Great Outdoors' elective this year, students were given the opportunity to participate in caving, canoeing, swimming, snorkeling, rock climbing, fishing and bush walking.

Throughout the semester our aim was to get students ready to attend our whole school camp. This year, we made some small changes to the camp days because we wanted the majority of the students to be able to attend and fully participate. We booked Mill Valley Ranch as our preferred venue, as they provide excellent activities, build great relationships with our students and the food is magnificent.

Most of the activities present challenges for our students. However, there is one activity that all students look forward to do every year and that is horse riding.

Horse riding is a challenging activity—learning how to control the horse is such a valuable experience. Mill Valley staff spend a lot of time and effort teaching our students the skills necessary to build confidence, ride safely and effectively.

Some of the other challenging activities included the ropes course, canoeing, swimming in the lake, archery, and a tour of an old bark hut at the back of the property.

Overall, the school camp was a great way for students to gain experience and learn while having fun. We had a large number of students attending for the two days and according to reports we have had from both parents and students, they had lots of fun and really enjoyed the activities.

Julio Bustos



We even made it into the local paper. Here are Louis, Ruth, Diederik and Gat modelling their outdoor ed skills!



All the World's a Stage

This year Berengarra's drama program has been supported by *First Call Fund* at Arts Centre Melbourne. Students participated in editing workshops at The Channel and an incredible range of productions, including Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Circus Oz. As part of our drama electives, we also toured The Athenaeum Theatre, and La Mama, which we thoroughly enjoyed. We are very proud of how the students embraced these opportunities and represented our school in a mature and appropriate manner. Congratulations must also go to Connor Raselli, who was selected to participate in a week-long scholarship course at Melbourne Theatre Company. Okan and I were thrilled to attend his presentation and look forward to many more performances from Connor in the future, as he moves on to his new school.

I am impressed with our students' consistently respectful behaviour in drama classes this year and their ability to take on the challenges of scripted work, which included Shakespeare! Shepherd home group won the class award for their overall attitude and enthusiasm and were a pleasure to teach. Well done everyone!

Thank you to Okan, Emma and Amelia for their support of the drama program this year.

I would also like to congratulate Okan on his new role as a VCAL trainer at our Pathways campus. It has been a pleasure working with Okan over the past 2 years—his support was vital to the development of a drama program and we will miss him at Box Hill!



Berengarra Cup

The students were out again for the annual Berengarra Cup on Wednesday 26th of October. The students galloped down to the park and enjoyed sprinting races, followed by the Berengarra Cup event. Medals were given out to numerous students who came 1st, 2nd and 3rd. We also enjoyed a home group event of tunnel ball with the Dingo home group coming in first. Overall, the event was fun and we were impressed by the amazing 'fashions on the field', accompanied by great food, which was supplied by the cooking elective group. Well done to all the students who participated and we all laughed when the sprinklers randomly turned on and gave a few of us a good soaking!



Physical Education:

During PE this term the students have enjoyed a range of activities including basketball, cricket, football, badminton and walking. The students have participated well and although the weather has deterred us from more outdoor sports we have persevered and enjoyed some indoor activities.

Thanks

Jenny



Talk to the Animals

This term, students enjoyed visits to Collingwood, Myuna and Chesterfield Farms, along with educational sessions at RSPCA and Animal Aid in Coldstream. We also had some fabulous days out with Zora, the reclassified guide dog, who particularly enjoyed her swim on the Altona foreshore. Well done to all students who attended these excursions, sharing their passion for animals and representing our school very well.

As has become a tradition at Berengarra, we organised a 'Bring Your Pet to School Day' which was well attended and allowed students to introduce their pets and various family members to the school community. All donations received on the day will go to Animal Aid. Thank you to all who attended and supported this event.

Gwen and Okan



The Art Room

WITH ANNE, CLAIRE & OKAN

Semester 2 - 2016



This term we have been as busy as usual and the art room is covered in students' work. Patterned work and drawing from life work, paintings of images looking through a window and claymation figures in interesting self contained dioramas. All students have explored drawing skills this term (which is the basis of most art work), as well as some sculptural technology. Many of the elements and principles of design are now evident in their work as they progress forward at a fantastic pace. Their time in the art room is always pleasing and together with my assistants Claire, Nina and Amelia, we wish everybody a happy and restful break and look forward to working with the students in 2017.

Monday Yoga

Sharyn & Ros

Yoga sessions were offered to students from 'Flow through Yoga' each Monday afternoon. This involved the students travelling to Blackburn each week to work through various yoga poses and relaxation/meditation techniques. The students were challenged by some of the poses and being expected to stay still and focus on their breathing. I think all students benefited from the experience and hopefully they may be able to use some of the strategies they learned at home. The best part was definitely the head massage!



Creative Cup Cakes

This elective was very popular with many students choosing to get creative! We made some vanilla cupcakes and then learned a number of different decorating and icing techniques. Students learned to pipe chocolate and butter cream icing and they also learned to work with fondant icing. We had a go at 'cake pops' and the students each made a beautiful sponge cake with feather icing. Our final product was a self designed and decorated birthday cake. The students found the decorating challenging but the results were beautiful and the students should be very proud.

Food Technology

This term students really were able to build on the skills that we have been developing all year. We started off the term with chicken fillet burgers and milkshakes that were really enjoyed by all. The students then prepared buttermilk pancakes, lamb souvlaki, apple tea cakes, Spanish baked eggs with chai tea, spring rolls, and focaccia. We finished the term off with Christmas biscuits.



Students now know the kitchen procedures well and most look forward to what we are preparing each week. The students have all worked hard and enjoy making suggestions as to what delicacies will be added to the program.

Thanks must go to Ros and Emma for their assistance each week as their help makes the practical session run smoothly and successfully. Well done everyone!

Sharyn

Christmas Cooking

This term's long elective was very successful, with students working on a variety of Christmas goodies. The students enjoyed making Xmas cookies, gingerbread people, plum pudding cake pops, and our "piece de resistance" - some spectacular ginger bread houses. The students made their own dough, cut out walls and rooves, constructed the houses using royal icing and then decorated the house with lollies. The whole school community were very impressed with how professional the houses were. Congratulations to all students!



Pathways Camp

The Pathways Campus enjoyed the scenery of 160 acres of natural bushland at Campaspe Downs in Kyneton for 3 days. Students participated in a range of confidence building activities, including leap of faith, flying fox, giant swing and raft building. It was an inspiring sight to witness students overcoming their fears, by participating in such intensive activities. Staff took revenge—initiating a pre-planned water fight with students, soaking them from head to toe! Students were also able to enjoy the delight of an indoor pool and gym and a range of great meals. Students showed persistence in adapting to the weather—with temperatures ranging from a 35 degree summer day to a winter storm the next. **This didn't deter students from making the most of their time on camp. Our cabins had lakeside views and each one was spacious enough for students to have their own personal space, including a comfortable bed and ensuite.**

Overall, camp 2016 was a really positive way to end the year and was enjoyed by all!



Pathways

Again this year, we have much to celebrate! As another year comes a close, we can reflect on our **students' hard work and outstanding achievements**. I am proud to state that this year we had a record number of students passing their VCAL.

We have two students who have passed their Foundation VCAL, and another 11 students who have successfully completed their Intermediate VCAL. At the Café four students have completed their Certificate II and Certificate III in Retail and a special mention has to be given to a further five students who have passed the higher qualification of a Certificate IV in Retail. Added to this, many students have completed a Responsible Serving of Alcohol Certificate (RSA) and a Food Handling Certificate. **I'm also delighted for students who were very successful in their VET courses elsewhere.** Congratulations to all! You have shown great commitment and you should be very proud of your achievements. This is a fabulous outcome.

As staff we take great pleasure in seeing our students achieve and begin to fulfil their full potential. In order to reach your goals it takes hard work and a willingness to push through the challenges that arise. **Berengarra offers a “chance for change” and those students have taken that chance.**

I'd like to take this opportunity to wish the best of luck to the students who are leaving us this year, as some of you move onto further education and others into the workplace. I hope you have enjoyed your time at Berengarra and I wish you happiness and success in your future endeavours.

For the students returning, well done again for your achievements and we look forward to seeing you again next year.

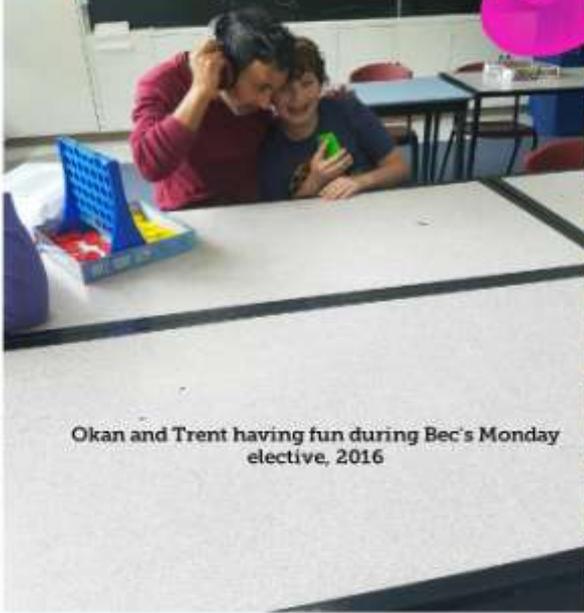
Thank you all for your support and an enjoyable year. Have a fantastic Christmas and New Year.

Justin

Deputy Principal, Pathways Program



BEATS



Okan and Trent having fun during Bec's Monday elective, 2016

Diederik & Dan enjoying a hot chocolate during Bec's Monday elective, 2016.



Thomas, Iain, Rhys and Adam being DUDES, at the Pathways café during Bec's Monday elective, 2016.



GETTING READY FOR A FUN DAY OUT AT UP UNLIMITED, 2016.

COREY, RUTH, PAIGE, DIEDERIK, DANIEL, ZACH, GAT AND CONNOR.



Parent Portal

Parent Portal and School Reports

The Parent Portal can be accessed online anytime. Details and login procedures have been mailed to you.

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

If you have any problems please email Samantha at berengarra@bigpond.com

Newsletter

Our newsletter can now be found on our website at

<http://www.berengarra.vic.edu.au> under the “download latest newsletter” on the front page.

Any older newsletters can be found under the ‘News & Events’ tab, Newsletter archive.

Thank you,

Samantha



Donations



A huge thank you to Variety Club and The Jeffery White Foundation's for the donation of a new bus to Berengarra School!



Term Dates 2017

Term 1 staff return - January 30th

Parent ESGs - January 30th, 31st & 1st Feb

New Students Orientation & ESGs February 1st 10-11am

Students start - Thursday February 2nd

Term 1 ends—March 31st

Good Friday—April 14th

Easter Sunday— April 16th

Term 2 staff return— April 18th

Students return—Wednesday April 19th

Term 2 ends June 23rd

3 week break (Staff Conference during week 3)

Term 3 staff return July 17th

Parent /Teacher interviews July 18th

Students return—Wednesday July 19th

Term 3 ends September 22nd

Term 4 staff return October 9th

Students return—Tuesday October 10th

Midterm break November 6th & 7th, Cup day.

Term 4 ends December 8th

