Hi All,

It’s halfway through the year and all is going well. Not only have we settled in 19 new students across both programs, we have also continued to improve our facilities and teaching practices.

Teaching and Learning

This semester I have completed a thorough review of all assessment information available on each student to determine what resources should be allocated to our teaching and learning plan. The major areas of difficulty in our students’ learning were receptive, expressive and pragmatic language, working memory (auditory), fine motor coordination, processing speed and mental health. We are now in the process of engaging specialists in these areas to assess our current teaching practices and provide advice on what additional resources are available to assist our students. The staff are always keen to improve their teaching practices by adding to their “bag of tricks”, and they are looking forward to many productive professional development sessions over the next twelve months.

Internet

At the Box Hill campus the speed of our internet connection was the source of frustration and stress to everyone. In “simple” technical terms the internet speed had dropped from 8 to 4 MBps over the last two years, due largely to the huge increase in demand in the Box Hill area and little improvement in infrastructure to accommodate this. The NBN? Not due until 2018 (at least!). So we have decided to invest in a fibre optic connection that will guarantee a 50MBps service. Expensive yes, but that is the cost of doing business now, and in education a quick and reliable broadband service is essential. Hopefully it will be ready to go by the start of next term.

In addition we have purchased a new set of laptops for Pathways and a class set of Ipads has been donated by Balwyn Rotary to the Box Hill campus.

Staff

Next term I have appointed one of our teaching assistants, Claire McIntyre, to a new counselling position at Pathways. The position will be for 0.3FTE, and Claire’s main role will be to provide support for students whose personal issues are affecting their attendance. Claire has recently completed a degree in counselling at Melbourne University and is keen to put her new skills into practice, so here’s her chance!

We are also saying farewell to our youngest (and probably our most popular) staff member Anj Bapat. She has been working as a teaching assistant for the past six months at Pathways, taking a break from her studies in psychology, and has now landed a job at the Department of Justice. On behalf of all the staff and students I wish you luck, it’s been great to have you on the staff.
To all the supporters of Berengarra that receive our newsletter by mail, we would like to get all recipients on to our Newsletter Email list. This would save us postage, stationery and time. If you have an email address you would like the newsletter to be sent to, please email the school with the details.

Thankyou Samantha

Parent Portal and School Reports

This will be the last time you receive student reports and newsletters by post, as next term we will be opening a parent portal which can be accessed on-line anytime. Details and login procedures will be mailed out early next term (!).

Also, parents of the Box Hill students will notice the format of the student reports has changed. We have finally updated our administrative package to included a report facility, and this has enable the staff to access and co-ordinate all the reports, saving them time and angst. A big thanks to Bec Emmett and Catrina Salton for training the staff in the use of the reporting package over the last few months.

The Principal’s report – continued

Well, half the year gone already and it’s time for a break. See everyone on 11th July.

Pete

Donations

Thankyou to the Balwyn Rotary Club for their continued involved with the Camberwell Market and continued support of the local community we are very grateful for our 10 Ipad 2 Airs.

Thankyou to the Balwyn Rotary Club for their donation of $2000 which will go towards purchasing video equipment for our Drama program.
Berengarra Character Day/Fun Run (Hosted by Adidas)

When: September 14th 2016 - National Health and PE Day
Why: Raise money for childhood trauma
Where: Berengarra School and Springfield Park
What to wear: Come dressed up as your favourite character
(movie, TV, computer game, book etc)

How to raise money:
Click on the link to set up an online fundraising page and pass your link to friends, family members, neighbours etc so they can make a donation!

Menu items for sale
1 item per student each day

Date: Monday-Thursday

Berengarra Cafe

- Snack box: $2.50
- Rice cups: $1.50

Café etiquette:
- Line up in an orderly fashion
- Wait patiently
- No queue jumping or allowing others to go before you
- There will be no service after 1:10pm.
Sexuality Education

In term 2, the whole school received three sessions of sexuality education delivered by Family Planning Victoria. Sexuality education covers a lot more than the ‘birds and the bees’. A large focus of the program focused on early relationships and consent. Negotiating these issues for young people is really challenging and can be very confusing. Laying the foundation for healthy, respectful relationships as early as possible is imperative, particularly if as a society we are going to tackle the issue of sexual and family violence which has far reaching, long-term impacts for everyone.

Overall, the program was received well by students and the level of engagement in the subject matter was remarkable! It was interesting for staff to realise there are major gaps in some students’ understanding of the basics of reproductive anatomy, conception and pregnancy. And it was great to see students receive important information about sexually transmissible infections, contraception, safe sex and consent and the law. At Berengarra we have decided to continue delivering sexuality education using expert educators from Family Planning Victoria, ensuring our students receive the highest quality and up-to-date approach to education in this crucial area.

Gaming: when is it too much?

This is a common question we get asked at Berengarra and a major concern for all parents in this era of highly absorbing, constantly available technology.

Generation Next offers a great website with lots of valuable information and resources on protecting and enhancing the wellbeing of children and teenagers. Back in March their blog offered a great piece entitled ‘Tackling Compulsive Gaming In Boys’ by Justin Coulson. The article covers what constitutes ‘addiction’ to gaming. While gaming addiction is not an officially recognised psychological disorder, many parents and professionals working with young people would agree that for some, gaming can look very much like ‘addiction’.

For a behaviour to considered ‘addiction’ it needs to have a significant impact on functioning. The article states that for it to be considered addiction, five of the following criteria would have to be met: preoccupation or obsession with games, withdrawal, build-up of tolerance (ie. amount of time spend playing increases), attempts to stop or curb playing have failed, loss of interest in other hobbies, continued overuse despite understanding of the impact on the person’s life, lies about game usage, use of games to relieve anxiety or guilt and loss of opportunity or relationships due to game use. When considering this, at Berengarra there are likely to be several students who would meet this criteria.

So, should we get rid of games? The article states that while research shows a moderate amount of gaming is positively correlated with wellbeing, games do not make kids happy, help them achieve anything worthwhile or live well balanced lives so it is the role of parents and caregivers to monitor game usage and where necessary restrict it. This does not mean getting rid of games, this will only cause conflict. There are four recommended steps to addressing concerning levels of game usage. Firstly, talk it through in a calm, timely manner, not when they are absorbed in a game or when there is already a conflictual atmosphere. Secondly, work out why it means so much to them, why are they drawn to gaming, what are the underlying issues? Thirdly, solve the problem together, don't dictate how the issue is going to be approaches and lastly minimise the control the young person has over access to the technology. Coulson states that getting the conversation right, is key in a successful outcome in addressing concerning gaming in young people.

For the full article please go to www.generationnext.com.au/2016/03/tackling-compulsive-gaming-boys/ it is well worth the read!

Marianne Wray
Drama

Skits & Sketches

WITH GWEN & OKAN
**Sport**

**PE:**
During PE this term we have enjoyed numerous activities such as AFL, badminton, walking and soccer. The students in Shepherd had a great soccer game and put all their energy into scoring lots of goals.

Jenny, Bec & Jabby

( Picture Shepherd PE)
Activity Day

Activity day:

**Dingo** had a great activity day at the aquarium this term and we saw a variety of species of fish. We also got a chance to experience the 4D cinema in the aquarium which was a lot of fun.

**Shepherd** went to TunzaFun Xtreme and lunch at Knoxfield shopping town.

**Kelpie** had a fun time at Sidetracked and a yummy lunch at La Porchetta.

**Heeler** went to AMF bowling and also played Laser Tag.

**Monday Elective Model Making**
WITH ANNE, CLAIRE & OKAN

This term in art has been as busy as usual. Even though I missed half of the term due to illness, the students were well looked after by Siobhan who filled in for me. She was experimenting a lot with drawing and painting and the students appeared to enjoy this. When I returned I continued on with this theme and they have produced some bright and colourful work which looks fantastic. I think the illusion work was the best of the topics as they have taken this task on board wholeheartedly.

Roll on term 3 and I look forward to reporting their progress next semester. Anne
Hello from Sharyn & Ros

It has been another very successful term in food tech this term with students cooking a wide variety of dishes. We started off with ANZAC biscuits, fruit swirly scones and choc chip cookies which the students enjoyed preparing and eating. We also made chicken Caesar salad, macaroni cheese, pikelets with jam and cream and enchiladas finishing off with apple crumble.

Most of the students have been able to build on their cookery skills this term with many being able to collect and measure their ingredients and follow the recipe instructions independently to produce a well cooked dish. The students are learning many skills with the focus being on “home cooking” next term the focus will shift to more international dishes.

Card Making

During this term we had a “guest presenter” - Samantha (from reception) who showed a small group of us how to make some amazing cards. Samantha brought in her card making supplies and we made some beautifully creative cards using a variety of techniques. We learned how to use an embossing machine and we created a mother’s day card and some very cute birthday cards, a pop up box card at the end was the highlight. Many thanks to Samantha for her efforts.
Outdoor Activities

Point Nepean

Bushrangers Bay

Mount Dandenong

Latitude
This is Alex and Kyle Running their Barbeque Activity for their Professional Development Activity Planning task. It was done as a fair well to David’s overseas trip. Bruce was kind to help.

This is the celebration all the students organised to fair well Anjili on the 10th of June. They put in a great effort.
Term Dates 2016

2016 - 3RD TERM

Staff return - July 11th
Parent Teacher meetings - July 12th (staff will be in touch)

Students return - July 13th

Fund Run - September 14th

End of Term 3  September 16th - 12.30 pm

2016 - 4th TERM

Staff return - October 3th

Students return - October 4th

Camp - 16th - November 17th

Pupil Free Day November 18th

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

Pathways Breakup - November 30th

End of Term 4  December 7th  - 12.30 pm

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

Staff finish - December 14th