



# BERKELEY WEST PUBLIC SCHOOL

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Nolan St, Berkeley 2506

P.O. Box 56 Berkeley

Principal: Mr A. Attard

Wednesday 3 March, 2021



**From The Principal's Desk**  
**Remember-School starts**  
**at 8.55am everyday!!!!**

## Upcoming Events

- Fri 5 March-** Last day for students to return Life Education permission notes and \$2 payment
- Mon 8 March-** Life Ed van visit– Day #1
- Tues 9 March-** Life Ed van visit– Day #2
- Wed 10 March-** Life Ed van visit– Day #3
- Regional swimming carnival (Dapto)– selected students only
- Fri 12 March-** 2.10pm School assembly– students only
- Mon 15-Fri 19** 'Say No to Bullying' week
- Tues 16 March-** 3.15pm P&C meeting (AGM) in Community Room– COVID safe protocols apply– sign in and QR Code scan required
- Wed 24 March-** School cross country (8 yrs and up)
- Thurs 1 April-** Last day of Term 1
- Easter Hat parade for students
- Students do not need to be in school uniform (free mufti)

## Meet the 2021 Captains and Prefects

Congratulations go to our new student leadership group who were officially inducted in Week 3 as captains and prefects. They are– Amarli D (Captain), Harley W (Vice-Captain), Joshua B (Prefect), Kate H (Prefect), Martin S (Prefect) and Isabella R (Prefect).



**PLEASE RESPECT THE HEALTH CARE NEEDS OF OUR STUDENTS BY NOT PACKING EGGS, PEANUTS or PRODUCTS CONTAINING PEANUTS IN YOUR CHILD'S LUNCHBOX!**



## Principal's Award

Congratulations to Phoebe S for receiving the Principal's Award this week for being a respectful, responsible and safe student at school. As well as her certificate, Phoebe will enjoy a \$4.00 food voucher to spend at the canteen and gets to sit on the stage at the next school assembly.



Fantastic job Phoebe!!

## Parent and Teacher Interview Preparation

It is very powerful to have teachers and parents involved in interviews so that everyone is clear about future directions and the effort that will be required. As a school we aim to encourage students to take control of their learning and to recognise the growth they are achieving in both social and academic areas. The 'interview' is an important opportunity to discuss your child's progress and to build communication and understanding between home and school. If everyone is well prepared, even a short interview can be productive and very worthwhile:

- Keep a list of questions you want to discuss with the teacher.
- If you want to discuss a specific matter, telephone in advance so the teacher can be prepared with the

information you are seeking.

- Ask your child if there are matters they would like discussed.
- Be ready to ask questions, or admit you do not understand.
- Share helpful information about your child or family circumstances. Teachers are appreciative of anything that helps them to know their students better.
- If you disagree with any assessments the teacher may have made about your child, listen carefully and ask for examples.
- Remember the interview is a valuable time to discuss your child, not share your experiences at school or philosophies about modern education.



Some questions:

- How is my child progressing?
- Are there ways I can help at home?
- Does my child need extra help?
- How does my child get on with other members of the class?
- Does my child have a sound work ethic in class?
- What is my child's behaviour like in class and at school?
- How well is my child doing on formal assessments?

After the interview:

- Discuss the interview with your child, including any points of action.
- Stress the good things that were said and be direct about any problems.
- Act on any suggestions made by the teacher.
- Keep working with your child's teacher by staying in touch.

Children respond positively to knowing that the important adults in their life are working together.

**Very soon** your child will bring home a note from their teacher asking you to nominate your preferred interview times. Parent/teacher interviews will run over the last three or so weeks of this term. List your preferences 1-3 and return this note to school. Shortly afterwards, your child's teacher will confirm with you the time you can meet with them. If your child does not bring a note home, or you don't get confirmation of your interview time, contact the school as soon as possible.

## Bullying

No child deserves to be bullied. Our school has made an intensive effort over many years to educate students about bullying and how to effectively deal with it. Numerous parent workshops have been held to assist parents in understanding their role in supporting

their children.

## What is Bullying?

Bullying is defined as repeatedly hurting another person who is less powerful- either physically or psychologically. Bullying can take many forms. We consider the following behaviour to be bullying:

- 1. Physical-** including hitting, punching, shoving, pinching, tripping, spitting, scratching, damaging, hiding or stealing belongings or throwing objects at someone.
- 2. Verbal-** name-calling, making offensive remarks, taunting, teasing, put-downs
- 3. Indirect-** spreading rumours, gossiping about or embarrassing someone, making fun of someone, using threatening looks or gestures, excluding or threatening to exclude from groups, ignoring, ostracising or alienating.
- 4. Cyber (Online Bullying)-** verbal and indirect social/psychological bullying through use of technology such as emails, blogs, websites etc

If your child believes he/she is being bullied at school then he/she has the responsibility to act in an appropriate, assertive manner as is taught at school.

Additionally, it is important that parents speak with their children about bullying behaviour and reinforce with them that they need to be assertive in how they deal with bullying behaviour. As is encouraged at school, teach your child to confidently tell the "bully" to stop because they don't like the behaviour. If the behaviour persists they then need to inform a teacher so that assistance can be offered to resolve the problem in a non-aggressive way. Under no circumstances will aggressive or violent physical retaliation be tolerated or accepted at school.



Telling is not "dobbing" if you have said or done nothing to deserve the behaviour being directed toward you. We need to develop a "telling" culture at school so that a person who bullies knows that the intended victim **will always** do something. As a result, students who bully will be quickly identified and their behaviour dealt with. If the victim chooses not to seek the assistance of staff and retaliates verbally, or physically to inflame the situation, this is NOT bullying. This is an argument/fight/disagreement between two individuals. Ever seen this at home? Do two wrongs ever make a right?

The biggest challenge in tackling bullying is encouraging students to report bullying to staff. Students have a responsibility at our school to report bullying behaviour to staff- not to retaliate.

Many students choose not to tell staff because, they themselves will impulsively fire a verbal or physical piece of ammunition back! Left unchecked, tempers will eventually fray and both parties end up escalating their behaviour to the point where all concerned will regret they didn't seek help. Physical retaliation at school will never be acceptable particularly when there has been a prior opportunity for students to report matters to teachers. Students that choose to physically retaliate

will be disciplined in accordance with the school discipline policy.

Remember, when it comes to bullying, "Awareness breaks the cycle of violence" and it is the responsibility of students to remain calm and make staff aware of bullying occurring at school.

### **Cyberbullying- What you can do**

*"Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others."* (Bill Belsey: [www.cyberbullying.org](http://www.cyberbullying.org))

Sadly, bullying behaviour is nothing new. However, people can – and do - use their phones and their computers to make this problem so much bigger, and so much worse.

Bullies can be people you know, but sometimes passers-by can join in because they believe they're anonymous and can't be traced.

Wrong. Every word, every action leaves a digital footprint that can be tracked right to the bully's virtual front door. Bullies will be found out eventually.

This kind of bullying can happen in school, or out of it. It can happen any hour of the day or night. It can leave someone feeling unsafe, and horribly alone.

**No one has the right to bully another person.** No one is expected to put up with it. At its most serious, cyberbullying is illegal and can be investigated by the police. However, even when it's teasing or a joke that's got out of hand, there are steps you can take to stop the bullies and take back control:

- **Ignore it** – often this is enough to make the bully go away
- **Block** the bully
- **Tell someone** – tell your Mum or Dad, or another adult you trust. Or you can call a helpline (like the Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800)
- **Keep the evidence** – this can be useful in tracking the bully down
- **Report it:** - To your school - they have policies in place about bullying and cyberbullying - To your ISP/phone provider – there are actions they can take to help - To the police – if there is a threat to your safety the police will help

### **For parents and carers**

"Kids these days..."

...have, at their fingertips, an incredible range of communications media, and ways to express their creativity and make friends and connections.

However, some people will use their phones and computers to bully others through SMS, IM, email, through the misuse of social network services, through the mis-application of programs such as Photoshop or any of the myriad of video programs freely available online. It can be personal - defamatory, embarrassing, even threatening. It can take the form of power-play from so-called 'griefers' in gaming sites such as Runescape, World of Warcraft or in Second Life. It can

also involve repeated spam attacks, hacking, virus assaults and other technologically crippling things.

It can happen to anyone, not just the obviously vulnerable children. Sometimes otherwise confident, outgoing individuals can be targeted, and the effects are no less devastating.

Common signs that a child is being subject to cyberbullying might include:

- changing patterns of how they use the computer – perhaps being reluctant to go online, or seeming unhappy once they've been there;
- receiving a sudden increase in the number of SMS messages;
- having trouble sleeping, having nightmares;
- becoming withdrawn, appearing depressed, having mood swings, crying without reason;
- feeling unwell, with no specific symptoms;
- becoming anti-social, having less to do with their friends;
- falling behind in homework, being reluctant to go to school, even skipping school.

Of course, kids can exhibit signs such as these for any number of reasons, however, increasingly, parents do need to be aware that cyberbullying could be a contributing factor.

Each family should formulate a clear strategy with their children about how to deal with bullies, both on and offline. Strategies could include:

- **Communication:** It is incredibly important that you communicate with your children about their online well-being. It sounds a bit too easy, but setting the pattern of talking to your kids right from the start about what they are doing online and who they're talking to, finding out about the kinds of experiences they are having, can mean that your kids are not afraid to talk to you when something is happening to them that makes them unhappy. It'll help you understand their point of view so that you are ready to take action to help straightaway.
- **Research:** Find out the anti-bullying policies at your children's school. Many schools are also building in specific cyberbullying policies just to deal with this issue.
- **Report:** Know who to contact if your child is being cyberbullied and what the procedure is for removing distressing information from the internet.

Places to go include:

1. Your internet service or phone provider;
2. The operator of the site where the bullying content is hosted; these sites should provide a 'report abuse' mechanism visible at least from the home page or in its safety advice area;
3. Where the messages contain any form of threat you should report this to the police as soon as possible.

Simply ignoring the problem – or trying to address it by 'turning it off' – won't work. Research shows that, often,

incidence of bullying aren't reported because the victim is afraid they will either be blamed for it, or because they are afraid of losing access to a critical means of staying in touch with their real friends. Kids are literally wired together...to break that connection would be to isolate the victim even further.

### Maths Tip!

You can help your child at home by involving them in mathematical activities and talking to them about maths and its everyday use.

**Mass and Height-** Keep a record of your child's mass and height. See how much they have grown each year. Do this for everyone in the family. Graph your results.

### Student Assistance

If you require assistance meeting expenses related to your child's education you are welcome to call the school and ask to speak with the Principal Mr Attard.

### Attendance Cup!

Congratulations to 1/20 and KJ for winning the Attendance Cup over the last two school weeks.

Can your class take the cup from them next week? Do your bit for your class, be at school every day!

Also the first GAS (Great Attendance at School) Awards for 2021 will be awarded soon to those students with attendance equal to, or better than, 94%. We understand that a small number of students may have missed out as they have been sick, but we need to recognise the best of the best!



A reminder that students are expected to be at school everyday by 8.55am unless they are sick or have important family commitments. After a student returns from an absence, staff expect a note/phone call from parents or caregivers explaining why. Phone calls are quick and easy and save you time having to write out a note.

This year teachers will continue to pay particular attention to students who are regularly missing one day or more a fortnight, or those students whose absences are repeatedly unexplained. Missing school on a regular basis will obviously have an impact on student learning and the capacity to build on concepts and skills. Your child's teacher will contact you if worrying patterns are beginning to occur.

We also send SMS messages out to parents when their child is absent from school everyday. If you receive one of these messages, call our school on 42711478 and explain your child's absence. This will save you having to write a note.

Your child will have all of his/her absences tallied for the year recorded on their half-yearly and yearly report cards.

Where a pattern of attendance causing concern is noted, staff, the principal or one of the region's home school liaison officers may contact parents. Soon notifications will be sent home with students who have attended below the benchmark level, many of which have outstanding explanations.

Students persistently arriving at school late also should

report to the school's front office upon arrival with a note from their parents acknowledging their late arrival. Otherwise, parents can call the school and tell us immediately why their child is arriving late. Absences for being late or leaving school early will also be printed on your child's report card.

**Remember, every day counts– school begins at 8.55am everyday!**

### Eyes and Ears!

When was the last time you had your child's eyes and ears checked? If it's been any longer than a year ago, make an appointment today!

Good eyesight and hearing can be taken for granted at times. If your child's sight or hearing hasn't been checked lately, or at all, invest some time to get them both checked out. Think of the obvious impact that unchecked poor eyesight or hearing could have on your child's learning and behaviour.

### Sick Bay

Quite regularly students inform staff that they are feeling unwell and request to visit the school's sick bay. Once at sick bay students are monitored for a short time and if they are not feeling better, their parents are called to pick them up from school. Although the vast majority of students coming to sick bay are genuinely sick, some are not. Unfortunately, staff are not medical staff and if there is any doubt about your child's health, you will be called. If you are finding some illnesses are not genuine once you have collected your child, you need to discuss and resolve this issue with your child. All parents need to be available, or have someone available, to come to school and pick up their children if they become sick. If nobody can be contacted, and the situation warrants it, the school will call an ambulance for the student.

### Writing for a Purpose

Writing for a purpose gives writing a whole new perspective. Imagine if you were asked to write for 20 minutes with no guidelines as to the topic, who was going to read it, or what you had to do with it when it was finished. This may remind you of your school days when you had to write a composition or essay for assessment and had it handed back to you with a mark out of ten based on how neat the handwriting was and how many spelling mistakes you made!

Our main focus in the teaching of writing is on being able to express our ideas and being able to share them with others. Children are shown a variety of writing styles from narratives (stories and retells), procedural (recipes or instructions), greetings (cards or letters), lists, invitations, posters and explanations.

After having a particular style of writing modeled for them, they move into individual writing time where they decide the purpose and audience for their own writing. They experiment with writing materials, with words and sounds, and with the language. Some pieces of work are published and used in the classroom as reading material. It is important for writers to have a purpose for their writing, so you may see many student produced signs or lists hanging in the classrooms.



When visiting the school, take a peek

and see how much student writing is on display.

### **Easter Hat Parade**

Unfortunately, current COVID restrictions for schools mean that parents are unable to attend our annual Easter Hat Parade this year on Thursday 1 April. However, we would love the students to come along with their hat for the parade. We will take lots of photos and hope to put together a slide show that we can post online for you to see. As this day is the last day of term, (traditional a free mufti day at BWPS), students do not have to be in school uniform on the day of the parade. If restrictions change between now and then we will advise you of any alternative arrangements for you to come along and watch.

### **School assemblies**

Like many other school events, school assemblies are currently impacted by restrictions on parents entering the school premises. This year, if classes present a live item to the assembly it will be recorded and shared with parents via Class Dojo. If class teachers decide to showcase their class via a digital presentation, they will share this at school assemblies for the students and make it available to parents via Class Dojo. If you haven't already signed up with your class teacher's Class Dojo account, please do so as soon as possible, as it is through this platform that many class messages, student work and items are shared by your child's teacher.

### **Head Lice**

Several cases of head lice have been reported recently by parents and a note has been sent home to particular classes asking parents to check their child's hair. If your child contracts head lice, please contact the school so that a note can be sent home with every child in the class. Your call will remain confidential and will hopefully assist in controlling this frustrating problem.

Information on treating head lice is available from school upon request.

### **School Email List**

If you are not currently on the school's email list, and would like to be, please go to-

<https://forms.gle/Lcka8E4omzNPHyKJ7>

and add your name and email address. Your details will not be shared with anyone else and will only be used by the school for school business.

If you are already on the email list, **you do not have to** rejoin!

You will receive emails from time to time with additional reminders, upcoming events and the school newsletter sent home each fortnight in electronic form. Very handy!

### **2021 Student representative Council (SRC)**

At our school assembly last week, our Student Representative Council (SRC) was inducted for 2021. Elected representatives will meet with Ms Duncan throughout the year to brainstorm ways of improving our school. SRC reps will come to meetings full of ideas from their peers and will organize several projects throughout 2021. Thankyou Ms Duncan for coordinating the induction and to all the family members of the newly elected reps for coming being part of the ceremony!

### **Safe People Safe Places– good tips to protect yourself from strangers**

- Make sure your parents or another adult you know knows where you are at all times.

- Always walk straight home or to the place you are walking to. Walk near busier roads and streets, or use paths where there are lots of other people.

- Know where safe places are – a shop, service station, police station, library or school. If you are ever frightened, you should go to one of these places and ask them to call the police.

- Learn about safe adults you can look for and talk to if you need help – police officers, teachers at school, adults you know and trust.

- Don't talk to people you don't know and never get into a car with someone you don't know. If a car stops on the side of the road and you don't know the person inside, do not stop.

- If you are scared and can use a phone, call 000 and tell them you are scared.

- If someone tries to grab you, yell out, 'Go away, I don't know you'. This lets other people know you have been approached by someone you don't know.

### **Withdrawing your child from this year's NAPLAN testing**

Parent information about this year's NAPLAN online assessments has been sent to parents of Year 3 and 5 students this week. All students in Years 3 and 5 are expected to sit the assessments at school. If you believe there are compelling circumstances as to why your child should not take part in some or all of the tests, you will need to speak with Mr Attard now. Students will not be able to withdraw themselves without their parent's and the school's consent.

### **School Merit Awards**

Don't throw out those little pink "Qualifier" slips you might find in your child's school bag or pockets! Pink Qualifiers are earned by our students for great work at school. Once they have collected 5 pink Qualifiers, they hand them to their class teacher who will present them with a Merit Award in class.

Keep those Merit Awards safe! Once a student has earned 5 of those, they give them to the Assistant Principals (Mrs Moore- Kinder to Year 2 or Ms Duncan Years 3-6) and they will be presented with a "Big Blue" Award at the next whole school assembly.

But that's not all! Collect 5 "Big Blues" and hand them to the Assistant Principals and you will be presented with a \$4 canteen voucher for you to use at the canteen!

Keep hold of all other types of awards such as Student of the Fortnight Awards, Uniform Awards, Great Attendance at School Awards etc as they all count as a Merit Award that can help you get your next "Big Blue".

5 Qualifiers  = 1 Merit Award 

5 Merit Awards  = 1 "Big Blue" Merit Award 

5 "Big Blues"  = 1 Canteen Voucher 

**School Attendance**

Parents/Caregivers are reminded that children must attend school on every school day unless they have a reasonable excuse for being away, such as illness.

Visiting family, being tired, and staying home on birthdays are not acceptable reasons to be away from school.

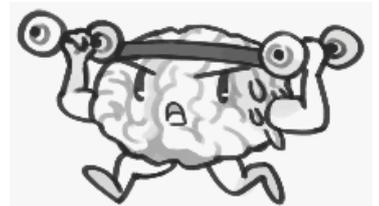


**MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD IS IN SCHOOL EVERY DAY.**

Class	Student of the Fortnight	Reason
KJ	Iarna Leonard	For being a responsible and hard worker and a great role model to other class members.
K/1F	Ella Cavanaugh	Engaging with all learning tasks with pride and enthusiasm.
1/2O	Grayson Kime	Being responsible for his learning and staying on task.
2/3F	Braxton Cook	For his ability to work independently during literacy groups.
3MS	Nixon Dun	For being kind and supportive to all his classmates.
4/5T	Razan Al Harere	For her hard work and dedication in writing and for having a sensible and focused attitude across all subject areas.
5/6H	Russell McKendrick	For his positive attitude, hardworking manner and his efforts to always make sure others are okay.
5/6LW	Harmony Ashmore-Dennis	For her mature and responsible approach to every task in the classroom and rising to the challenge in maths activities.

**What's Happening 1/2O**

1/2O have had an amazing start to the year. Mrs O'Callaghan is incredibly impressed by how responsible we all are. We have been quick to adapt to new routines and expectations. She tells us that she thinks we are just the best class in the school, and we have to agree with her. We have been looking around the school for artefacts that give us a clue to how students learned in the "olden days" and we have found a few. Although we didn't need to look far because apparently Mrs O realised she is almost an artefact herself because she knew all about the items we found. 2021 will be a great year of teaching and learning and Mrs O keeps reminding us that it's ok to be confused with new learning because that means we are growing our brains.



## Parent Line



CatholicCare's Parent Line is a free counselling service for Parents and Carers of children 0 – 18 across NSW 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Our professional counsellors are available now to talk to parents about a wide range of issues.

### Website for Parents

At Parent Line, we know that the joys and rewards of parenting are many. We also know that sometimes issues can crop up that can challenge families. Some of these include challenges with adjusting to going to school, transitions from primary school to high school, issues around family breakdown, helping a child who is being bullied at school, the stress of supporting children through the HSC to name a few. At times parenting can be tough!

It's during times like these, that we all need someone to listen to our story, help us remember and acknowledge our successes and strengths and help us find new ways of sorting through these challenges. Parent Line NSW provides exactly that.

Go to- [www.parentline.org.au](http://www.parentline.org.au). This website is a great resource for parents and carers that is easy to read and access and gives parents and carers the facility to email us with enquiries.

Of course the best way to get the best help from Parent Line is to talk to one of our professional counsellors. They can listen to your issues and tailor some strategies that could assist your family.

Last year Parent Line Counsellors helped over 8,000 parents and carers across NSW with a wide range of parenting issues. We are lucky enough to have 5 male counsellors on our team, if there are Dad's who prefer to speak to another male.

**Concerned about any parenting issue? Ring Parent Line NOW.**

1300 1300 52

[www.parentline.org.au](http://www.parentline.org.au)

## Days missed = years lost

A day here and there doesn't seem like much, but...

When your child misses just...

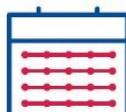
they miss weeks per year

and years over their school life

1 day per fortnight



= 4 weeks

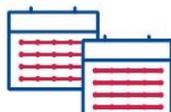


= Over 1 year missed

1 day per week



= 8 weeks



= Over 2.5 years missed