



## 2020 Annual Report for the 2019 School Year

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*I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth – 3 John: 4 (NIV)*



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## MESSAGE FROM THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

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**“Whatever you do work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.”**

What makes a great school?

I believe Berowra Christian School is a great school. BCS is a great school because it has been providing a strong spiritual, academic and social foundation to primary aged children for 34 years. I believe that the excellent learning achieved at our school in 2019 is due to the great culture that exists, and has been a feature of our campus since its inception in 1986.

In 2019 this great tradition continued and was highlighted by:

- a) The arrival of our new Kindergarten students
- b) Excellent compliance results with NESA registration, a Government finance audit and Fire safety
- c) Outdoor Education
- d) Creative arts
- e) Charity support
- f) King Street Kids Before and After School Care Service

### a) **Our new Kindergarten Students**

We welcomed 9 new Kindergarten students in 2019 with their wonderful curiosity and sense of fun and adventure. I enjoyed seeing the strong friendships that quickly developed among the new K-1 parents. This was particularly evident after school each day as they relaxed and chatted together in our leafy playground.

We also welcomed another 4 students throughout the year to other grades and in Term 4 of 2019 we were excited to enrol a further 9 students to start in Kindergarten 2020.

### b) **Excellent results regarding Compliance**

This year we underwent our 5 yearly NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) registration. This involves submitting documentation on various aspects of the School's policies and procedures to the NSW Education Standards Authority. Some examples of areas reviewed include Curriculum, Programmes, Child Protection, and Governance. The staff are to be congratulated on their professionalism and hard work in preparing for our NESA registration. As in past years this progressed very smoothly and registration was granted until 2024.

In early 2019 we also underwent an audit – “The 2018 Non-Government Schools Census Post Enumeration Exercise” This involved an audit of all the student data that was submitted in 2018 regarding how children with disabilities are classified. These results were checked against our records and reports. The outcome was very successful and confirmed the accuracy of the school's record keeping and decision making processes regarding the classification of students with disabilities.

In Term 4, as the bush fire season began, we invited Fire and Rescue NSW Berowra to visit our site to look at our Bushfire plan, inspect our site and importantly to meet our students. The Berowra Fire and Rescue Team were very impressed with Berowra Christian School's planning, maintenance of site, fire equipment and our children's knowledge of what they do in the event of fire emergency. One of the fireman spoke to our school staff and students and said. “I would like to fight a fire here. You have good plan and you should feel safe”

We also experienced our first ever forced school closure due to the Catastrophic Fire Danger declaration from the RFS on November 12, 2019.

### c) **2019 Outdoor Education**

One of the greatest memories children often have of their school years is camps. Berowra Christian School has a long and successful history of organising camps, excursions and outdoor education.

- New for 2019 was an outdoor education experience. Years 5-6 undertook a day of physically challenging team building at the "RAW Challenge" at Doyalson.
- Our 3 yearly Bathurst and Blue Mountains Trip for Years 5-6 was a wonderful time away. The children experienced the wonder of the mighty Grand Canyon bushwalk at Blackheath, the Sheep and Cattle Drome and life in the Gold Fields at Bathurst, and then the magic of Jenolan Caves.
- Years 3-6 also undertook a local bushwalk to help them become familiar with the demands of bushwalking prior to our Blue Mountains Walk. This gave students the opportunity to carry lunch and water in a daypack, decide on appropriate bushwalking clothing, and get used to walking in slightly challenging terrain.
- A new Camp structure for Years 3-4 was established. A one night introductory camp experience, wonderfully run by Crusaders at Galston, was a great success.

### d) **Creative Arts in 2019**

2019 saw the continuation of strong **Music** and **Art** programs for all students:

- Our first ever 'Just Art Day' was attended by 31 students in the historic Berowra Old District Hall. This was an intensive Art day where students were taught and mentored by visiting artists.
- 'Berowra Musicfest' is the joining together of all local school bands culminating in a performance at Hornsby RSL. BCS now hosts all the rehearsals in the lead up to this performance in our school hall.
- Our BCS choir performed at the Berowra Woodchop and also at 'Carols under the Star', a combined community Carols event in the local area.
- There were also visits to the Art Gallery NSW, Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Brightwaters Christian School.
- The year culminated in the premiere performance of the original Musical "The Lost Sheep" written by our Music Teacher – Mrs Lindsey Forster

### e) **Support for Charities**

Berowra Christian School again supported many charities including Samaritans' Purse, Anglicare's Winter appeal, hampers for those in need in our local area (through Mission Australia Hornsby), also Lifeline, the Bible League and Spina Bifida Awareness. Every child took part in a game of Wheelchair basketball as part of a Wheelchair Sports NSW visit.

### f) **King Street Kids Before and After School Care**

Finally, our Berowra King Street Kids (OOSH) before and after school care program has gone from strength to strength with new students, some new staff and a constant stream of exciting activities and initiatives. King Street kids has a wonderful balance of fun and learning, nurture and challenge, busy activity and calm security.

I am thankful to all those who made a contribution to school life at Berowra Christian School at some point during 2019. We are so blessed to have such a supportive team of staff, families and board members who all work together to ensure our school is a dynamic and nurturing place. It has been another wonderful year for a great school!

Steven Dodd  
Principal

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## MESSAGE FROM THE SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR

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The vision of Berowra Christian School is:

“To offer children a comprehensive education that will train them in Godly thinking and living in a nurturing environment that encourages them to realise their full potential, develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and live joyful and productive lives for Him.”

Our teaching, support and OOSH staff as well as parent volunteers led by Mr Steven Dodd and the senior teaching staff are extremely passionate about doing all they can to ensure that this vision becomes reality for our students. Parents and supporters work tirelessly and are an essential part of the fabric of the school.

In 2019 we welcomed seven new families and farewelled three families who have had a long association with the school. Whilst we will miss these families and wish them the very best for the future, we are also excited to be welcoming new families for 2020. Our enrolments continue on an even trajectory, providing a stable base.

This year’s accreditation through the NSW Education Standards Authority went extremely well. Many thanks to our teaching and support staff who ensured that high quality information was provided.

There were no changes to the board during 2019. We met twice a term to provide governance and support, working through policies, finances and initiatives. Each meeting we spent time in prayer for the school. Our directors are volunteers who share the staff and parents’ passion for the vision of the school.

David Cowdery  
Board Chair

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PARENTS AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

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Like every year 2019 started off well and we were all keen to start to put many of our 2018 ideas to put into action!

The wonderful Berowra Christian School branded marquee's (two 3m x 3m) were designed and ordered thanks to Sam Leslie. These arrived just in time for our school Cross Country Carnival and they looked amazing at the State Cross Country Event amongst all the other schools marquees. I know that it really helped the children running when they saw it on the home stretch.

Jane Mohsen, our Fundraising co-ordinator did a brilliant job of organising a cake stall that was held at Wahroonga Village In March 2019 - this was in line with our plan to raise funds from the greater community. It was fantastic and we managed to sell out on the day, thanks to some clever marketing by one of our parents. We raised over \$500.

Continuing with our philosophy of "Friend Raising" Heidi Cameron and Ann Leslie organised a great kids disco in Term 2, complete with coloured hair spray, great music and a sausage sizzle. The children and all those involved (ie teachers) had an awesome time.

In Term 3 we discussed organising a Mothers Dinner and Sally Zinsli made this happen in Term 4 when a group of mum's managed to get to the local Thai restaurant in Berowra. A great night was had by all, with much chatter and laughter.

Our AGM saw many members retain their roles with the inclusion of a couple of new faces which is exciting. We decided again that we will keep our focus on our "Friend Raising" with a couple of small fundraisers throughout the year.

The year finished beautifully with a Berowra Christian School stall under our marquee at Carols under the Star. It looked great and our children sang so beautifully on stage.

Again I'd like to thank my Committee and all the other school parents that jump in and lend a hand without question. I look forward to seeing what we get up to in 2020.

Jo West  
P & F President

## CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION ABOUT BEROWRA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL - RICH HISTORY

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Since its inception in 1986, Berowra Christian School has been dedicated to providing families with an outstanding Junior School experience, where children's learning is founded on a knowledge of God, His world and their place in it.

We are a K-6 school with an enrolment of around 51 students serving the northern Sydney wooded ridges between Hornsby and the Hawkesbury River. Our teaching staff are fully qualified professionals who are deeply committed to the holistic development of each child in their care. A comprehensive school sporting program, choir, debating, accredited camping programs, excursions, drama, school band and community service constitute some of the opportunities available. Students are encouraged to discover and develop both individual and collaborative interests and abilities.

Service has been integral to the life of the school. Students are encouraged to serve each other, partners and charities in our local area. The school has been blessed through supporting many National and International charities and our Year 6 senior students lead this work as part of their service.

For 34 years, BCS has fostered strong links with community groups local and abroad, as well as families and students current and past.

BCS is a founding member of Christian Schools Australia and Christian Schools Sports Association. In 2017 we joined the NSW Association of Independent Schools.

## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND TEACHER STANDARDS

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During 2019 each **staff member** undertook 9 days in-service on:

- ▶ Child Protection Protocol
- ▶ Work Health and Safety
- ▶ CPR qualification
- ▶ Relational Schools
- ▶ Christian Foundation of Education
- ▶ CSA State Conference at Penrith Christian School

**Individuals also attended** courses specific to Classroom Development Programs including School Improvement, Training for Teacher's Aide, Implementing Digital Technologies, Training for Students with Neurodiversity, Operation Art, National Policy Forum, Leaders Summit and Principal's Retreat. This amounted to course costs of about \$5,500 and salaries of \$30,100, creating an average Professional Development cost of over \$5,700 per staff member.

In 2019 there were 7 teachers responsible for delivering the curriculum. All staff are now accredited as 'Proficient Teacher'.

**Reports** complied with the A-E grades required by Department of Education Employment and Work Relations.

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## WORKFORCE COMPOSITION

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All staff at **Berowra Christian School** are practising Christians of evangelical persuasion who subscribe to the school's Statement of Faith. They are committed to teaching from a Christian world view and are highly dedicated and well trained.

**All classroom, part-time and support teachers** (excluding Teachers Aide) **have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia** or as recognised by the National Office of Overseas Skills recognition guidelines; ie category (i) teachers as defined by the Act. They hold predominately bachelor degrees or higher, plus Dip Ed or equivalent.

In 2019 there were:    2 *full time teachers (including the Principal)*  
                              5 *part-time teachers (total 2.2 FTE)*

All teachers are accredited at the 'Proficient' level.

The retention rate for staff from 2018 to 2019 was 100%. Most staff retained substantially the same work load. Staff attendance stood at 96%, not including Long Service Leave or Leave Without Pay. Average teaching experience exceeds a decade, ranging from five to over thirty years. Teachers are assisted by part-time specialists in Music, ESL, Special Education and Gifted and Talented programs. There were no known indigenous staff.

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF NON-ATTENDANCE

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Attendance is to be recorded daily, electronically in a roll maintained by the teacher, who should be informed of any impending absence. If a student is unexpectedly absent, the parent/guardian should notify the school early in the day, either in person, by telephone or written note. If the school is not notified, the parents will be contacted by the school. In the absence of a written note, a Notification of Absence of Child Form is sent to the class teacher to be retained in the roll. These forms and any notes from parents are kept for twelve months. Parents of children absent from class at commencement for whom no note is received are contacted by the office. Teachers are responsible to inform the office of absences by 9.30am using the Class to Office Absentee Slip. Unexplained absences are followed up until a satisfactory explanation is achieved: in the first instance by the office secretary, then under direction of the Principal or their agent if more than two hours has elapsed. Any absence from school requires a signed and dated letter from the parent/guardian in advance according to the Certificate from Exemption Policy.

The student's attendance record is noted on the mid-year and end-of-year reports, a copy of which is kept on each student's file. Consistently poor attendance levels will be discussed with the student's parent/guardian. Rolls are to be submitted to the Principal for review at the close of each term. They remain the property of the school, being retained and archived at the close of each year. Roll marking procedures are to be carried out by the class teacher according to the recommended codes as provided to each class teacher.

Student attendance throughout 2019 was 94.2% made up by Year 1 (96.0%), Year 2 (94.3%), Year 3 (90.1%), Year 4 (95.6%), Year 5 (94.2%), Year 6 (94.0%). Non-attendance is monitored by the requirement for early advice, followed by further contact in the case of unexplained absence by 9.30am. Qualification is required for extended absences.

## ENROLMENT, POLICIES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENT BODY

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Policies remain substantially the same as the last report with the next review in January 2020. Stakeholders can access the full texts via the Parent Handbook, School Website or by contacting the school office.

In 2019 the school continued its pastoral plan to meet the needs of the children by dividing grades to produce classes that follow NESA Stages. Seeking to provide the best social and academic opportunity, 2019 classes were Kindy-Year 2, Year 3-4 and Year 5-6. The majority of children speak English at home, with Chinese, Afrikaans and Spanish languages also represented. At census date in 2019 the enrolment stood at 50. The maximum allowable enrolment of 120 remains, with ceilings being 28 in composite classes and 20 in Kindergarten.

School Enrolment Policy remains the same as last year in stating that:

*Berowra Christian School is open to all children whose parents are seeking to give them an education which is consistent with the aims and objectives of the school, provided the school has the resources to meet the child's particular needs, and subject to the availability of places.*

It is the school's aim to have broadly equal numbers of boys and girls in each year level. The School Board is responsible for setting the enrolment policy and is the final avenue of appeal in all matters relating to it. It is expected that families enrolled in the school will have an active association with a local church. At present, around 17 churches are represented.

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## ENROLMENT POLICY

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Berowra Christian School welcomes applications for enrolment from students whose parents/guardians are seeking education for their child/children within a Christian context.

Because of the Christian philosophy of the School, it is assumed that enquiring families share the Biblical values and beliefs on which the school is based and strive to encourage these values and beliefs in their children through their own example. The school would expect parents to be committed Christians or, if no active church affiliation exists, such enrolment applications will be considered and processed on the condition that clear support for the Christian philosophy and activities of the school is confirmed with a signed statement. Should parents/carers not both agree, assent must be given supporting the school's aims. The School Board is committed to preserving the true character of Christian community across the school.

The school seeks to provide equal opportunity for all applicants from families seeking a Christian education regardless of Church or denominational affiliation, and the School also endeavours to aid disadvantaged students where possible. Discounts on fees may be offered where parents are able to demonstrate that their family is experiencing major financial hardship.

An "Application for Enrolment" form needs to be completed and forwarded with the required enrolment fee, a reference from a church elder or other person who has known the family for a number of years, a copy of the child's birth certificate, immunisation record and a recent school report (if applicable). A school-parent interview (usually with the Principal) is scheduled, followed by a child assessment interview to determine the child's readiness for school. At this assessment parents are required to bring along any pre-school or health professional reports that may help the school understand any specific needs the child may have. An Acceptance of Offer of Enrolment needs to be returned prior to commencement noting that parents:

- ▶ undertake, by example and instruction, to encourage their child in the establishment and growth of a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ
- ▶ support the decisions and aims of the School, ensuring their child abides by the conditions, regulations and assessment criteria of the school, attending at all times as required by law
- ▶ support the School in its aim to foster a spirit of co-operation and encourage the pursuit of excellence in all areas of endeavour, including the active and willing participation of their child in all aspects of School life, including Christian teaching
- ▶ accept the discipline policy of the School, and the School's discretion in the event of their child's failure to comply, in its recommendation for suspension or termination
- ▶ agree to pay fees promptly by due date, and to contact the School as early as possible if they encounter hardships
- ▶ agree that, since the School has a policy of not collecting an enrolment guarantee upon entry, they will be required to give one term's notice of termination of enrolment or pay that extra term's fees.

The School Board is committed to fair and just process based on procedural fairness and integrity. **For a student to be eligible to continue to be enrolled at Berowra Christian School, the School Executive must be satisfied that:**

- ▶ The student and their family are maintaining their full support for the Christian philosophy and ethos of the school;
- ▶ The family and student are meeting the requirements outlined on the original enrolment agreement e.g. Uniform compliance, fee payment, following communication procedures;
- ▶ The student participates fully in all extra-curricular activities arranged by the School including, but not limited to: School athletics, swimming, and cross country carnivals, Thanksgiving service, excursions and camps, unless granted an exemption by the Principal for compelling reasons.
- ▶ The family acknowledges that if they choose to withdraw their child from the School, a minimum of ten weeks notice must be given, or, if ten weeks notice is not received, then a full term's fee must be paid in lieu of notice.
- ▶ The activities of the student and/or family are not likely to bring significant criticism upon the School, or create disharmony or distress, for either staff, students or the School community;
- ▶ The student's behaviour and attitudes are such that it does not unduly interfere with the ongoing physical safety, spiritual and emotional wellbeing of other students in the school;
- ▶ There is strong acceptance by the student and the family of the authority of the School in organisational, educational, disciplinary and other school matters.
- ▶ Full disclosure of relevant medical and/or other conditions has occurred.
- ▶ Subsequent assessments carried out as part of ongoing school process indicate the school is able to meet the needs of the child.

Decisions are made prayerfully after informed consideration based on consultation with parents and staff and other affected parties.

If, following careful consideration of the evidence, a decision is made by the school executive that a student should not be enrolled for any of the above reasons, the family will be informed that the student has been excluded, along with an explanation. If the family of the student wishes to question the exclusion, an appeal against the decision, in writing, may be lodged with the School Board within seven (7) days of the date of notification of the exclusion. After the written response from the family is received, that Board will then make a final decision, giving due consideration to the matters at hand and the merits of the case. The results of the appeal will then be conveyed in writing to the family in question.

In future, changes may be made to the Conditions for Continued Enrolment at the absolute discretion of the School Board, and notification of the changes will appear in the School Newsletter for two consecutive publications.

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## SUMMARY OF STUDENT WELFARE & DISCIPLINE POLICIES

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Berowra Christian School continues to be recognised as a safe, supporting environment, where students are valued and cared for. To ensure that this continues the School Handbook contains a raft of policies concerned with the care and protection of children, antibullying, their educational and welfare boundaries and support mechanisms. It also contains our Complaints and Grievances Policy. The School Parent Handbook is provided to all families in January each year.

Key documentation relating to this area include:

1. **Child Protection Policies**, which articulates adult responsibility for the care and protection of children from any form of abuse or neglect, especially those matters pertinent to recent legislation and procedural fairness. Principles of policy development and duty of care guidelines are outlined with clarity, along with investigative protocols and procedures for dealing with allegations.
2. **The Discipline Policy**, which focuses on the development of a safe and caring environment by setting boundaries with rewards and sanctions. A number of methods are used to reinforce the positive attitude of the students in the school including verbal words of encouragement, TREK cards, certificates of recognition, and sharing of excellent work samples with other students. When there are situations which need correction and intervention, the teacher will follow the school's procedure to maintain the correct behaviour and positive attitudes. Communication between the teaching staff and the parents about the child's behaviour and work ethic ensures that students are receiving a consistent message about the standard that is expected.

As part of the Discipline Policy, the School follows rules of procedural fairness in the implementation of the discipline policy.

Berowra Christian School prohibits the use of corporal punishment and does not authorise or endorse the implementation of corporal punishment by others on its behalf.

## SUMMARY OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION (COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES) POLICY

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From time to time a parent may have concerns over their child's relationship with another student or teacher, as well as concerns in relation to other aspects of their child's education. Should a parent wish to address this we would want them to follow the appropriate grievance process. In general terms, this procedure means that initial contact is with the teacher involved, and if required, then to the School Coordinator or Principal and ultimately the School Board.

This policy and all contact details can be found in our Parent Handbook.

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## SUMMARY OF BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

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In 1 Peter 5 we read that we are to be shepherds to God's flock who are under our care. The Bible also reminds us of Christ's words "a new commandment I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." John 13:34. It is therefore essential that we do everything to ensure that Berowra Christian School is safe both physically and emotionally for students.

Prevention through education is the most effective way of dealing with bullying. The Principal conducts an assembly talk at the beginning of each year to help students define, identify and respond to Bullying in a proactive way. An information sheet summarising this talk (including identifying what bullying is, what to do if you see or experience it and who to tell), is sent home in Term One each year to all families. In addition to this the School conducts two bullying surveys each year to monitor students experience with Bullying. Again this year, reports of bullying were very limited.

When bullying does occur, Berowra Christian School takes the incident seriously and investigates the matter. If the incident is validated, the School will take action accordingly. It is the School's intent that all reports of Bullying are followed-up to a point of resolution and all parents of children involved will be notified. This policy in full can be found in our Parent Handbook.

**Berowra Christian School** follows the NSW Board of Studies requirements and covers the Six Key Learning Areas (KLA's) of English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE), Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE). Berowra Christian School continues to seek ways to encourage children to 'grow up into Christ'. This phrase from Ephesians 4:15 guides all our school programs and aims.

To this end, Christian Growth and Development is a key part of our PDHPE program and this is applied across the curriculum by

- ▶ Encouraging daily prayer and class devotion
- ▶ Conducting assemblies with directed themes according to Scope and Sequence and learning verses (Term 1 – Ephesians 4:15; 1 Peter 2:17;; Colossians 3:23; Ephesians 3:32; Matthew 28:1-10; Term 2 – Ephesians 6: 13-18; Term 3 – John 14: 1-6; Term 4 – Isaiah 9: 6-7).
- ▶ Presenting weekly Bible Study lessons in age appropriate ways across the grades
- ▶ Fundraising for those in need including Bible League, Legacy, Cancer Council and Mission Australia.
- ▶ Building relationships with community groups (senior citizens, local pre-schools, playgroups)
- ▶ Visiting local nursing homes to sing Carols at Christmas.

Also as part of the PDHPE program, **Berowra Christian School** enjoyed three wonderful sports carnivals. Every student took part in the Swimming Carnival in February which took place at Hornsby Aquatic and Leisure Centre in Term 1, Cross Country in Term 2 and our Athletics Carnival was held at Foxglove Oval, Mount Colah in Term 2.

During the year, other opportunities arose for BCS students to extend their skills in the PE area which included:

February	- CSSA Zone Swimming at Warringah Aquatic Centre
June	- CSSA Cross Country at Sydney International Equestrian Centre - CSSA State Gymnastics Competition
August	- CSSA Small Schools Soccer and Netball Gala Day at Kellyville. Qualified for the CSSA Metro Cup Soccer at Penrith - Zone Athletics at Narrabeen Sports Academy - Metro Cup Junior Netball & Soccer at Penrith
September	- CSSA State Athletics

Personal Development In 2018 we benefited from the School Chaplaincy Program. Mrs Lesley Burdon assisted with pastoral care and targeted programs in our school to help develop relationships such as Highway Heroes. We also benefited from a visit from the Life Education Van.

Creative Arts Our school band was run by our music teacher Mrs Lindsey Forster. The band's participation in the "Berowra Music Fest" concert was excellent. The band also went 'on tour' visiting the 4 local Berowra Schools during the year. Individual lessons are now available during school hours for a wide variety of instruments.

A Band Camp 'Intensive Day' was held in Term 3 which encouraged and stretched students, and was a great success.

There were also Open Days in Term 1, 2 and 3 which were very well received by those in our community and Grandparents and Friends Days in Terms 1 and 4 where children performed for a large and proud audience. Children took part in our Thanksgiving Night and each student was acknowledged with their Certificate of Recognition.

Visual Arts is highly valued in the Berowra Christian School community. Children from Years 3 to 6 take part in weekly lessons given by our specialist Art teacher Mrs Annabel Dodd with K-2 being ably taught by their class teacher Mrs Jodi Dagan. In addition to the K-6 Art program children participated in various Art competitions including Hornsby Art Society's Recycled Art Exhibition, the Harmony Day Poster Competition and Operation Art - run in conjunction with Westmead Hospital and the Department of Education Arts Unit. Olya Tomov and Amelia Ness's artwork was shown at the Armory Gallery in Homebush as part of the Operation Art Exhibition.

In Term 2 the Primary Art classes visited the Wallarobba Arts and Cultural Centre in Hornsby to see the recycled Art Exhibition.

In Term Four, BCS held its Art Exhibition with the inaugural hosting of the 'Berowra Archies' which was open to all the local schools. This was a fantastic event, with many students and families from the wider community taking part.

### Debating

Several students in Years 5 & 6 undertook Debating, with the opportunity to take part in the Inter School Debating Competition, a wonderful opportunity that saw students practicing their speech writing skills as well as developing confidence in speaking in front of others.

### Excursions, Incursions and Camps

Once again **Berowra Christian School** was a very busy and exciting place in 2018.

#### **Semester One**

The whole school remembered the sacrifices of many with an Anzac Day Service at school and representation at our local Berowra Anzac March.

The whole school visited Taronga Zoo which complemented the different science units being taught and was a wonderful day out.

K-2 had a visit from the Responsible Pet Ownership program to help them understand how to look after and be safe around animals.

#### **Semester Two**

K-6 were visited by representatives from the Commonwealth Bank to learn about saving and budgeting.

Years 4-6 attended a three day camp to Canberra and the Snowy Mountains to complement their study of Government.

Students in K-2 went on an excursion to Woolworths, Hornsby to see where their food comes from.

Students in Years 3-6 went on an excursion to the Hornsby Art Centre, "Wallarobba" where they were involved in a range of art appreciation activities to do with recycling.

Students in the BCS Band took part in the Berowra Music Fest again for local Primary schools in Term 3.

Years 5-6 visited the Community And Road Education Scheme (CARES) at St Ives, to learn about road and bike safety.

Years 3 to 6 visited the UPA and Christophorus House Nursing Homes to sing Christmas Carols in December which was very worthwhile and greatly appreciated by the residents there in the lead up to Christmas.

The whole school enjoyed a special Christmas play presented by Quizworx.

Berowra Christian School is committed to promoting respect, compassion and responsibility to the school community, comprising of the students, their families, teachers and the broader community.

### **TREK Values & Assembly Messages**

Respect and Responsibility initiatives were addressed in many ways in the school. Our 4 key School values of Truth, Respect, Effort and Kindness (TREK) were taught, encouraged and rewarded throughout 2019. Assembly and class themes continued to address consideration for others and the need for appropriate respect for authorities in our community. All these are taught with a Biblical foundation.

### **Anti-Bullying Messages**

As part of the NSSF framework we have an Anti-Bullying Policy. This is a pro-active initiative that runs during the year. Assembly and class talks are given and communication sent home. In 2019, the bi-annual Bullying Surveys continued to monitor the amounts of bullying being reported by students. This is very encouraging as this is the 14<sup>th</sup> year in a row, since surveys began, that bullying has shown to be stable with few incidents reported and all followed up promptly. In 2019, BCS took part in the National Day of Action against Bullying, and entered the Interrelate, 'Say No to Bullying' Poster Competition with a 100% participation rate.

### **Experience Leadership Program**

As students move through **Berowra Christian School** they are given many responsibilities and opportunities to show leadership. Each Year 6 student has the opportunity to be a Prefect for at least a semester and there are many responsibilities that accompany this position. In 2019 this involved leading groups, school errands, fundraising, peer support, public speaking and prayer. Through this daily leadership and assembly duties, students continue to build confidence. They had opportunities to set an example and be accountable for their actions, resolve conflict peacefully and learned to contribute to the welfare of society.

### **Partner Program**

Each student in the school is assigned a partner for the year. Normally a Year 6 student is partnered with a Kindy student, Year 5 with Year 1, Year 4 with Year 2 and year 3 with each other. Through this program the older students have the opportunity to lead and serve the younger students throughout the year. The scheme enables the school's secure environment to be strengthened and this is particularly important because of the support given to Kindergarten students when they start school.

### **Student Led Initiatives**

Year 6 students continued to take a leading role in promoting school fundraising events including the running of the Year Six Stalls as part of their end of year celebrations and community fundraising. Students were also involved in running the Cancer Council's Australia's Biggest Morning Tea for the school.

### **Community Involvement**

Developing students to be respectful and responsible members of the broader community continues to be an important part of school life at Berowra Christian School. Students were involved in visiting a local pre-school to share stories with the younger children, they attended the Remembrance Day Service at Berowra's War Memorial and many took part in the local ANZAC Day March. One of the highlights continues to be visiting nursing homes to perform Christmas Carols and talk to the residents.

### **Celebrating Others**

Recognising and celebrating the people in our lives is an important part of showing respect to them. As a result, Berowra Christian School's Mother's Night, Father's Day Breakfast and Grandparents and Friends Days are important events in the school year which the students prepare for and are encouraged to attend.

## STUDENT OUTCOMES IN STANDARDISED NATIONAL LITERACY AND NUMERACY TESTING

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In 2019 our overall student performance was quite sound. It was pleasing to see how well the students worked across all our classes and in a wide variety of assessments from school based through to external assessments. Many of our students achieved some very good results. Like in previous years, our assessments included class assessments and observations, in-school standardised tests, NAPLAN for Years 3 and 5, and English and Mathematics UNSW Competitions for Years 3-6.

Participation in these different assessments helps to identify students who may be struggling, particularly in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy. Part of our academic focus is ensuring that each child achieves their best. These assessments also help to highlight specific areas that may need to be addressed across the years. Some of our students require additional support and this is given through the Special Education Teacher and the Teacher's Aide. Individualised programs are developed in conjunction with the classroom teachers to help target a student's specific area of need, as well as providing in-class support when necessary.

In 2019, BCS took part in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) for Years 3 and 5. This was once again a positive and productive experience for our students. They continue to perform to the best of their ability and did well compared to other local schools. Our average scores for Year 5 were above the State average for three areas and slightly below for two areas. Our average scores for Year 3 were well above the State average for three areas and slightly below for two areas. Most of our Year 5 students scored within the top 4 bands for each test, with more than 40% scoring in the top 2 bands. Most of our Year 3 students scored within the top 2 bands for each test, with 100% of students in these bands for 3 of the tests. Overall, we had more than 60% of students score in the top two bands for Yr3, and more than 60% in the top three bands for Yr5. Based on these results, our main area of improvement to look at in both groups is Reading Comprehension. Most of our Year 5 students were at or above expected growth in each area except Reading. Once again it was pleasing to see that none of our students were below national minimum standards.

Some of our students from Years 3-6 took part in the English and Mathematics University of NSW International Competitions and Assessments for School. All the students who took part enjoyed their participation and gained valuable experience in these areas. We had 7 students sit the English assessment, and we gained 2 Distinctions and 1 Credit. We had 8 students participate in the Maths assessment, where we gained 1 Distinction.

As well as these assessments, we completed our own additional testing on all students K-6, mid-year and end of year. We completed observations and assessments informally throughout the year. There were no unexpected or surprising results in these assessments. All of these results and observations provide the school with detailed information about individual student performances, and help us identify areas of need across the school. The standardised tests we use focus on Reading, Spelling and Numeracy for students across the years. Most of our students did quite well and improved on their scores from May to November in each of the areas.

It is encouraging for the school to see such great participation and results across various assessments throughout the year, especially considering that we work with such a varied range of abilities in our children, both behavioural and academic.

During 2019 various opportunities were given to parents, staff and students to give feedback about various aspects of life at Berowra Christian School.

### **Parents Feedback Survey**

Parents were all given the opportunity to provide feedback on various aspects of their child's education. Exactly 50% of families responded, which was a good representation.

### **Some key Findings from the 2019 Survey:**

100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that "The school provides a safe, inviting atmosphere which is conducive my child's learning."

95% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that "school discipline is fair, well managed and clearly communicated to my child." (The other 5% were neutral).

100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that "Teachers and staff are caring, enthusiastic and model positive behaviour to my child."

95% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that "I am happy with the learning opportunities and variety of activities available to my child at BCS." (The other 5% being neutral).

90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that "The school curriculum presents a Biblical world view whilst addressing NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) requirements." (With the other 10% being neutral)

100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that "The school takes my concerns seriously, is well managed and effectively led."

### **School Student Bullying Survey**

Since 2005 all students, (K-6) have been surveyed anonymously twice a year (each semester) to monitor the level of bullying in the school. This is a procedure in our policy and is important for education, empowering victims, collecting data and creating a culture of the disapproval of bullying.

In 2019 between just 4 and 6 % of students were identified as displaying bullying behaviour at sometime within the two survey periods during Terms 2 and 3.

These figures continue to be among of the lowest figures reported since surveys began in 2005.

### **Staff Satisfaction**

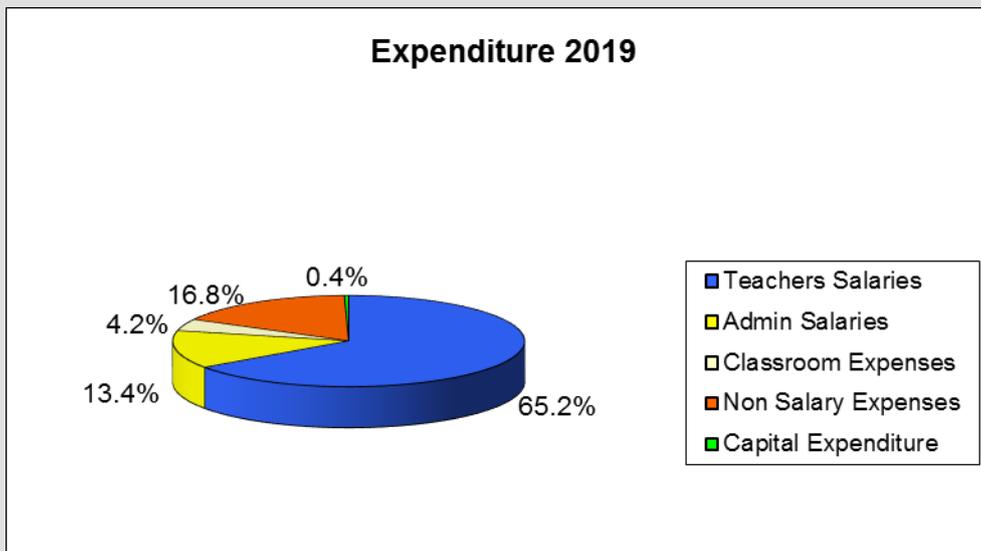
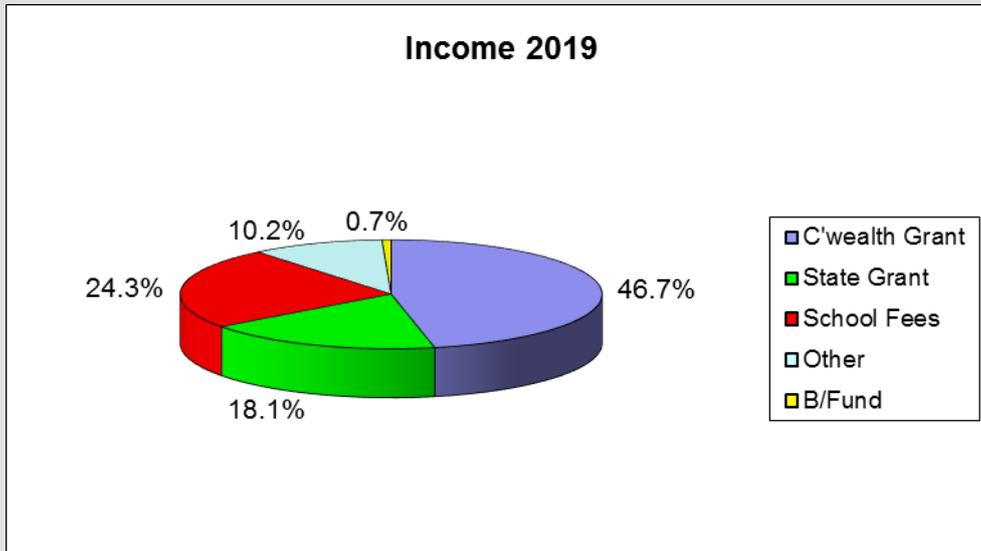
Berowra Christian School is a wonderful place to work. BCS has an experienced, passionate and stable team of staff who love coming to work each day. A Staff retention rate of 100% for the last three years is a sound indicator of the level of staff satisfaction at Berowra Christian School. Feedback during annual staff appraisals confirms this level of staff satisfaction.

In 2020, the school improvement aims are:

- ▶ To improve the amenity and appearance of our school by replacing worn carpet in our classrooms, replacing old classroom furniture and replacing the older style timber seating in the playground.
- ▶ To work through the NSW Department of Education's "What Works Best" School improvement plan.
- ▶ To upgrade the ICT (Information Computer Technology), across the school including the server, replacing desk tops with Chrome books, upgrading all staff computers and connect to the NBN.

Targets determined for 2019 were achieved as follows:

- ▶ The amenity and appearance of our school was improved by painting and repairing play equipment. The multi-purpose (OOSH) room was upgraded with new "wet area" flooring and a dishwasher to assist OOSH staff providing breakfast and afternoon tea to students.
- ▶ To review standardised testing being used by the school. Standardised test results were reviewed and for 2020 new tests, the latest available, have been ordered. In reviewing the standardised tests a broader need was established which links to the assessing of the way Mathematics is taught.
- ▶ To analyse and improve the teaching of Mathematics in the School.



Individual policies and Statement of Faith are available on request at the school.

## CONTACT DETAILS

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BEROWRA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

PRINCIPAL - Mr Steven Dodd

Cnr Berowra Waters Road & King Street, Berowra 2081

PO Box 425, Berowra Heights 2082

Ph 9456 2444

E [enquiries@bccs.nsw.edu.au](mailto:enquiries@bccs.nsw.edu.au)

[accounts@bccs.nsw.edu.au](mailto:accounts@bccs.nsw.edu.au)

W [www.bccs.nsw.edu.au](http://www.bccs.nsw.edu.au)

