What's happening at BWPS?

Upcoming Events

Welcome Back!

Tues 9 Feb - School swimming carnival for all students 8 yrs or older who can swim 50m – permission note required

Tues 9 Feb - Free vision screening at school for all Kinder students – permission note required

Thurs 11 Feb - 2.10-3.00pm School assembly in hall – Induction of 2016 School Captains and prefects – all welcome!

Tues 16 Feb - 9.15am P&C meeting in the school Community Room – all welcome! – child friendly!

Mon 22 Feb - Fri 26 Feb - Class teachers will hold a parent information session during the week at school – keep your eyes out for a note coming home soon!

Wed 24 Feb - 2.10-3.00pm School assembly – Student Representative Council induction for those students elected by their class to be SRC Reps – all welcome!

Fri 26 Feb - PSSA sport for those Year 3-6 students who have elected to participate and returned permission notes

Fri 4 March - PSSA sport for those Year 3-6 students who have elected to participate and returned permission notes

Wed 9 March - 2.10-3.00pm School assembly in hall – all welcome!

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

Welcome back for what’s sure to be an exciting 2016! We hope that you had a safe and happy holiday period and have started the school year ready to work hard together. Term 1 is an 11 week term with school breaking up on Friday 8 April.

For those parents or guardians new to our school, particularly kinder parents, school newsletters are sent home on Wednesdays of even school weeks with the eldest or only child in the family that attends school. These newsletters are the best way for our school to keep in touch with you and keep you informed of upcoming events in the school. Please read all newsletters carefully so that you and your children don’t miss a thing. If your child is away on a newsletter distribution day, they should collect one from their teacher upon their return to school. Spare newsletters are kept outside the school’s main office.

Organisation of Classes and Staff

At this stage we have formed 8 classes this year. We are confident these classes will remain as they have been formed, but this is reliant on student numbers staying stable over the coming weeks.

Welcome back Mrs Friend for 2016!

Once again, Mrs O’Callaghan will work as our Reading Recovery teacher whilst Mrs Robertson continues the great job she does as our Learning and Support
Teacher assisting students with additional learning needs, as well as their teachers.

Mr Ruscica and Mrs O’Callaghan will teach a variety of subjects as our release from face to face teachers with Mr Ruscica also taking care of library administration. Mrs Moore will work across all classes supporting teachers with their professional learning needs and classroom practice. Mrs Mackey, Mrs Cassar, Mrs King, Mrs Tait and Mr Kardos will work as our school’s administrative support staff.

Information sessions with your child’s class teacher will be organized early this term in which you can meet your child’s teacher who will discuss classroom routines and requirements.

2016 Classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KN–</td>
<td>Mrs Norrie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K/1H–</td>
<td>Mrs Haynes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1K–</td>
<td>Miss Knowles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2J–</td>
<td>Miss James</td>
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The Berkeley West Public School App!

Great News! Our school has a FREE mobile phone app and tablet app! What’s that? (you may ask), it is a little application that sits on your phone or tablet device and gives you instant access to our school information when you click on it, 24/7. We now have over 150 people using our app. The app gives parents the ability to instantly access newsletters without going to the website, or to send in a sick note while you stand outside the school because you forgot to write a paper note! You can even order your child’s lunch for the upcoming day! Download it to your smartphone by going to either the Apple App Store or Android Google Play Market and search for Berkeley West Public School. Once you have found it, press install or download. If you don’t have a smartphone or tablet, you can go to the following website and use the app on your computer- http://apps.activemobileapps.com/html5/?appcode=BerkeleyWPS

If your clever enough, you can even scan the Apple or Android QR code on the next page on your smart phone to get the app downloaded even faster! (you may need to download a QR code reader app first to scan them.

Change of Personal Details

If your family details have changed over the holiday period, in particular, address, phone number or emergency contact numbers, please inform the school immediately in writing or come in and see Mrs Mackey in the office. Accurate information means we can contact you quickly particularly if the matter is urgent.

Starting the School Year

You can read all types of research that will tell you how to identify a successful school; however I believe the best ‘litmus test’ is the response of the children, teachers and parents. Although only early days, we have had an extremely smooth start to the school year. Credit must go to our dedicated staff who have spent many hours ensuring that we have a ‘hassle-free’ start and credit must also go to the children who have settled quickly and industriously back into ‘school mode’. I have been delighted by the many positive comments we have received about the school and how the children have settled in.

Schools are dynamic ‘people organisations’ and as a school community we all have a vested interest in the well-being of the school. The working relationship between the home and the school is a vital link, ensuring a positive and productive education for every child.

As Principal, my number one priority is the happiness and safety of every child. Children who are feeling happy and safe are receptive learners. If you have concerns about your child, please contact us, as ‘problems’ are far more easily attended to now than weeks down the track!

We are only too aware that at times parents tend to think their concerns are trivial and you debate with yourself whether you should contact the school. Our response is that NOTHING is too trivial when it comes to the education of YOUR child. So if you have concerns or want clarification, please contact us. I will ask you, however, to consider the following points:

- Teaching staff’s number one priority is teaching the children and therefore if you arrive unannounced, it may not be convenient or possible to release them from teaching duties to speak to you. It is always best to arrange a meeting time by calling the school or sending your child’s teacher a note.

- If you want to meet with me, it is generally best to also make an appointment as I can have a number of commitments throughout the day and am not always readily available on short notice.

School Uniform

What a great sight to see all students returning for the beginning of 2016 in their school uniform! Thanks in particular all students and parents who have made an effort to purchase black shoes. Clever families have even purchased black shoes that are also appropriate for sport and physical education. Our students look great and we need to keep it that way! Please note that students must be wearing black shoes (along with the rest of the correct school uniform of course!) to be...
eligible for a uniform award on those random days they are awarded.

Beginning this year, students must also possess a school hat at school on days when uniform awards are presented. Either the wide-brim, baseball style or bucket style hats available from the uniform shop are acceptable. Obviously, we would love to see the majority of students wearing the wide-brim style as they offer the best protection from the sun’s harmful rays.

Please be reminded that the school uniform shop is open each Tuesday and Thursday 8.30-9.15am.

Generally, we also tend to find that students in uniform are much more settled and willing to follow school rules! Full school uniform on school excursions is compulsory and is essential for safety reasons.

Our summer uniforms are-

**Boys summer uniform**- blue polo shirt, grey shorts, white socks, black shoes.

**Girls summer uniform**- school dress, white tie, white socks, black shoes or blue polo shirt, grey shorts, white socks, black shoes.

**Sports uniform (Years 3-6 only, Fridays only)** - White polo shirt, maroon shorts/skorts, white socks, black joggers.

**Hats**
A reminder that students are required to wear a hat during recess and lunch all year. Students without a hat will be asked to stay in the shaded areas during playtime. Put simply, no hat, no play!

**Anaphylaxis**
Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction to environmental allergens such as certain foods, bee stings etc. This condition is life threatening.

In 2016, we have several students who suffer from a severe allergy (anaphylactic reaction) to peanuts and products containing peanuts as well as egg. The smallest contact with these food products will put the health of these students at extreme risk.

To support our students, Mrs Correia, manager of the school canteen, does not sell peanut products on the canteen menu. She is also aware of all of our anaphylactic students and ensures procedures are followed when selling food items to these students. In 2016, the school is seeking continued support from all parents to refrain from packing food items in their child’s lunch box that contain peanuts or traces of nuts.

It should be noted that the immediate danger not only comes from accidentally eating peanuts or products containing nuts, but also from inadvertently touching or smelling traces of peanuts even in very small amounts. In the case of a severe reaction, anaphylactic students must be injected with an Epipen containing adrenalin within a matter of minutes to save their lives.

Once again we are relying on the goodwill of our entire school community to support our students. We trust that everyone will be more than willing to assist in this matter.

**Money and Permission Notes coming to School??????**
**PUT IT IN THE DROP BOX!**

Our school has a secure drop box built into the front office wall in which you can now place all notes, money etc coming to school. Obviously, make sure any envelopes containing notes or money have your child’s name and class written on it, along with what the payment is for.

So no more money to the class teacher please, simply stop in at the office as you get to school in the morning and “CHUCK IT IN THE DROP BOX!”

**School Email List**
If you are not currently on the school’s email list, and would like to be, please send Mr Attard a request via email at-
andrew.attard@det.nsw.edu.au

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

**Berkeley West Public School Website**
For those new parents, or those that haven’t visited it yet, a reminder that our school website can be found at-
www.berkeleyw-p.schools.nsw.edu.au
Here you will not only find upcoming events on the school calendar, but past and current school newsletters, student work, photos and many other useful links.

Parent/Teacher Information Sessions
A chance to meet your child’s teacher will take place during in Week 5 (commencing Monday 22 Feb). These meetings are not individual interviews, but a chance for you to meet the teacher and for them to give you some information about general class requirements and routines. A note outlining specific details from your child’s teacher will be sent home with your child soon.

Parent/Teacher Interviews
As has always been the procedure, if you need to discuss any part of your child’s education with his/her teacher, please call the school office on 4271 1478 to make an appointment and somebody will get back to you to confirm a mutually agreeable time. Do not approach your child’s teacher unannounced, as he/she may not be able to accommodate you. If you have any questions or issues regarding your child’s education, we encourage you to openly communicate with us. Please don’t let important issues slip by, deal with them immediately and in isolation for a prompt resolution!

If you wish to visit the school during school hours to drop something off to your child you must report to the school office first. This procedure has been established in the interests of student safety and is not negotiable. At the office you will receive a visitor’s pass so that staff and students can identify you as an official visitor. Please return the pass at the end of your visit and ensure you complete an early release form for your child if taking them from school early.

Formal individual teacher/parent interviews regarding your child’s progress will take place later in the term. Once again, be on the look out for information sent home later in the term.

Staff Development
During the staff development “pupil-free” day on Wednesday 27 January, teaching staff undertook some training in how to create a class “Weebly”. Basically, this is a website for each class where the teacher can publish links to resources to support students in learning at school. As teachers get more proficient at using “Weeblies”, their potential is limitless! You never know, you might be invited to check out your child’s class “Weebly”!

Picking Up/Dropping Off Students
As was the system put in place last year, parents are asked to drop off or pick up their children at the school pedestrian gates on Gallop and Nolan Streets (not the carpark gates)! If you wish, you may accompany them or pick them up inside the school grounds in the outdoor covered area outside the school hall and canteen. We have placed some blue chairs out in this area for parents. Again, this is in the interests of child safety and minimizes distraction in the playground or classroom.

Toddlers or younger siblings should not play on the school play equipment whilst waiting to pick up brothers or sisters from class. Additionally, dogs are not permitted onto our school grounds. Parents of Kindergarten students have arrangements in place for the next couple of weeks to pick up their children at 2.30pm.

School Crossing
A reminder to all school community members that cross both Nolan St and Gallop St to use the crossing facilities available. Our wonderful crossing staff, Kim Roberts and Faye Ryan do a great job and would appreciate the cooperation of all students and parents in crossing these busy roads safely. Approach crossings sensibly and await instructions from the crossing supervisor as to when to cross. Ensure you walk across the road when asked to do so. Parents are asked to wait on the school side of the crossing so that students won’t be tempted to dash across an unsupervised part of the road.

Parents also need to park legally around schools so that they don’t put lives in danger. We had a number of parents and visitors fined last year and don’t want a repeat of this in 2016.

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.

Cooking at Home
Children can help you prepare shopping lists, work out the quantities of ingredients needed, weigh the ingredients and check on the cooking time. Involve the children in selecting new recipes.

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.

Student Internet and Email Accounts
Just a reminder that all students have their own Internet and Email accounts with the NSW Department of Education and Training. These accounts can be accessed from home by students logging onto the DET Portal at the following address-

http://student.det.nsw.edu.au

Students will then need to enter their unique username and password that has been provided to them. If your child has forgotten his/her username and password you can ask your child’s teacher or send the Principal an email from your home account asking for it. This password needs to be kept secure from anyone else! You can email Mr Attard at-

andrew.attard@det.nsw.edu.au

Head Lice
Checking your child’s hair for any signs of head lice is a parent/carer’s responsibility. Please be vigilant in checking your child’s hair regularly for any signs of head lice or eggs. By doing so you will help alleviate the frustration that head lice cause for all of us!
Information on identifying and treating head lice is available upon request at any time of the year from school.

2016 Captains and Prefects

Our first whole school assembly for the year will take place next Thursday 11 February at 2.10pm. This assembly will be our official 2016 captain and prefect induction ceremony. All parents and visitors welcome to attend particularly those proud parents of the new captains and prefects! (Please note—our assemblies are usually on every second Wednesday, but this one has been moved due to a number of teachers being at a training course on Wednesday 10 Feb).

Birth and Immunisation Certificates

We have a number of parents of kindergarten students yet to present an immunisation or birth certificate. Student enrolment can only be finalised when parents provide the school with documentation such as a birth certificate or passport to verify their child’s age.

The Public Health (Amendment) Act 1992 requires parents to provide documented evidence of a child’s immunisation status on enrolment in schools, preschools and child care centres.

Parents have the right of not having their children immunised. However, under the Public Health (Amendment) Act 1992, in the event of an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease, unimmunised children will be required to remain at home for the duration of the outbreak.

It’s Not OK to be Away!

The average absence per NSW student is about one in every 13 school days. That means by the end of their schooling the average student has missed an entire year! Figures from The Department of Education suggest that only 40 per cent of students absent from NSW schools on any given day are away for genuine reasons. These statistics are somewhat swayed by secondary school data; however absenteeism is still a concern within the primary sector.

It is important for parents to understand that every day a student is away without reason, the absence is costing that child a learning experience. Where a pattern of poor attendance is noted, staff, the principal or one of the region’s home school liaison officers may contact parents.

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. Parents can also call the school on 4271 1478 if they know their child is going to arrive late. Students cannot just walk in to school late without a reason. Remember, school starts at 8.55am!

Our school is proud to have an attendance rate higher than the state average but we still strive to see a decrease in our absenteeism rate at Berkeley West. While we know and expect that there are genuine reasons for students being absent, maybe as a school community we can reflect on our school data and the reasons why a relatively small percentage of students account for such a large percentage of our absentee rate. ‘Food’ for thought!

ABSENCE NOTES- PLEASE!

School attendance rolls are legal documents, and under Australian law schools must account for student absences. If your child is absent or late for whatever reason, the school requires a written note indicating the date and reason for the absence. We appreciate your support in allowing us to fulfil our legal requirements.

School Gates and Parking

For safety and security reasons all gates except the single pedestrian gate on Nolan Street are locked for most of the day. If from time to time you find this single gate closed over, please note that it is NOT LOCKED. Sometimes it is just closed over and can be opened by lifting the bottom latch. On past occasions we have had stray dogs come in and out of the grounds causing unnecessary distraction and fear for some students.

As is the case for most parents picking up their children from school, parking is limited around any school at home time. Those that leave a few minutes earlier to park closer deserve the benefits of a prime parking spot. However, for the safety of our students, parents should not be parking in the no parking zones around our school. This includes the small bay outside the gates leading into the infants playground that looks like this!

Attendance Cup and “94 Club”

Every week we reward the class with the best attendance with the Attendance Cup. Also, each student is striving to remain part of the “94 Club”. The “94 Club” members are all students with an attendance rate equal or better than 94% for the term. Special awards are also offered to those students during the year. Don’t let yourself, your education, your class or the school down!

Wollongong High School of Performing Arts

If your are interested in completing an application form and audition package for your Year 6 child to attend Wollongong High School of Performing Arts in 2017, please ask for the associated forms from Berkeley West PS and have them returned to Wollongong High School by Friday 4 March, 2016.
Communicating with your school

Why it’s important to communicate regularly with the school - and how it makes life easier for all.


Reluctant reader?

Did you know that books that are part of a series can be easier to read and more attractive to reluctant readers? Here’s a list of excellent series books for kids of all ages.


New friends

When new classes are created and your kids discover they’ve been separated from their friends, it’s normal for them to feel a little anxious. How should you react?


Weather alert

Hot days = food poisoning danger. Pop a frozen drink into their lunchbox and the food will stay about 12 degrees cooler.


Do you know what these symbols mean?

1. Slip on clothing that covers your arms and legs
2. Slap on a broad brimmed, bucket or legionnaire hat
3. Slop on 30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen
4. Seek shade
5. Slide on wrap around sunglasses (if you can manage them)

Go to the Cancer Council website to find out more: www.cancercouncil.com.au/primary

Swimming Carnival Reminder

The school swimming carnival will be held next week, Tuesday 9th of February for competitors from year 2 (turning 8 this year) to Year 6. It will be combined with Lake Heights Public School and Warrawong Public School. Student will only compete against their age and school.

Notes went home on Tuesday. Miss Haworth

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 as 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 $3 canteen voucher for you to spend 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”.

School Merit Awards

5 Qualifiers = 1 Merit Award

5 Merit Awards = 1 “Big Blue” Merit Award

5 “Big Blues” = 1 Canteen Voucher

Breakfast club

A reminder to all students and parents that Breakfast Club has started for the year - 8.30am every morning.

Lots of Yummy breakfast!
Parent Line

Parent Line'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.

New 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. This website is a great new resource for parents and carers that is easy to

Port Kembla Youth Project offers swimming lessons

Term 1 2016 swimming will commence on Monday 1st February and run weekly until Monday 4th April 2016.

Cost is $11 per lesson per child and concessions are available if required. The lessons will be held in North Wollongong in a heated pool.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me on (02) 4276 1229. My office hours are Monday and Thursday 11am-4pm.

Kind regards,

Port Kembla Youth Project Swim Coordinator
4276 1229  pkyp@bigpond.net.au
www.pkyp.org.au

Illawarra Sports High School Year 5 / 6 Open Night

Illawarra Sports High School will be hosting a Year 5 / 6 Expo Night on Monday 15th February starting at 6pm in the school hall.

Come along, speak to the teachers and find out what our great school has to offer. We look forward to seeing you there.
RIDING THE WAVE - Surf Life Saving Program

Families of children with disabilities are being introduced to the fun of the beach and Surf Life Saving Nippers program through the Illawarra Branch’s Riding the Wave Nippers program. This program provides the opportunity through the clubs for children of all abilities to participate in beach and water based activities such as beach ball games, relays, flags, boards and wades.

Get involved and have some fun!

Riding the Wave program aims to:
- Provide an opportunity for all to be a part of a Surf Life Saving Club
- Provide an opportunity for participants to be involved in a non competitive, flexible Nippers program
- Provide an opportunity for participants to enjoy the beach and its surrounds in a safe manner
- Have dedicated and trained water safety personnel deliver the program.

The Riding the Wave initiative is a joint program between Illawarra Surf Life Saving Clubs, Surf Life Saving Illawarra Branch and the Office of Sport, Sport and Recreation. Riding the wave is a four week program conducted mid February to mid March.

Join your local Riding the Wave program TODAY!

When: Sundays
21 February until
13 March 2016
Cost: Free
Bookings: close on
15 February 2016

For further information and an application form please contact Catherine on 4228 5355 or email catherine.campbell@sport.nsw.gov.au

Your Local Clubs are:
Towradgi, Bellambi, Woonona, Bulli and Coledale

Supported by the

THE DISABILITY TRUST
...creating an inclusive world

ILLAWARRA
NEW SOUTH WALES

NSW GOVERNMENT