



Finley High School Newsletter

Principal: Mrs H McRae

Deputy Principal: Mr P Velikans

26th February 2015

KEY DATES

March

- 2** Immunisation – Year 7 Boys and Girls.
- 3** Open Boys and Girls Touch Football
- 6** Riverina Swimming
- 7** St Joseph's Catholic School Finley 100 year reunion
- 11** **P&C AGM 7pm in the Staff Common Room.**
- 12** Open Boys and Girls Soccer
- 16** Year Six Forensics Day
- 17** Legal Studies Excursion
- 19** School Photos
- 23** Photo catch-up day
Tennis and Lawn Bowls
- 25** Cross Country
- 27-31** Preliminary Final Exams
- 30** Under 15's Boys and Girls Soccer in Hay

April

- 1** Girls AFL Trials
Berrigan Shire Employment Expo

Principal's Message

We have reached the end of Week Five and the term is already half over. This term has sped by at a huge rate of knots as we all are now fully entrenched in our core business – teaching and learning.

Swimming Carnival

On the 12th February, we had our very successful Twilight Swimming Carnival. The rain held off and we had excellent participation from all the students in attendance. I congratulate all the students on their behaviour and encouragement of other students on the day. All the teachers did a fantastic job, particularly the PE staff who spent the entire day down at the pool ensuring that all events could be completed on the day.

Finley won the hotly contested war cry earning a valuable 50 points for their efforts!

The age champions were announced at Assembly last Tuesday. They were:

Boys Age (Years)	1 st	2 nd
13	Ben Ashley-Cooper	Clay Webb
14	Nick Burns	Bradley Chaplin
15	Darcy Webb	Zac Barlow
16	Tom Burns	Damon Anderson
17	Alex O'Leary	Michael McRae

Girls Age (Years)	1 st	2 nd
12	Emma Marsden	-
13	Hayley Doohan	Shiane Mason
14	Ellie Jones	Katie Archer
15	Eloise Ashley-Cooper	Chelsea Taylor
16	Michelle Barnes	Paige Nash
17	Ashleigh O'Leary	Rachael Barnes

The 2015 winning house for the swimming carnival was Coree (1412 points) followed by Murray (843 points), Tuppal (747 points) and Finley (688 points).

Zone Swimming

Forty One students went to Deniliquin on Tuesday to compete in the Zone Swimming Carnival. Of these, twenty seven students qualified for the regional carnival – many in several events. The Finley High School relay teams blew all other teams out of the water. I congratulate all the students on their achievements and wish them every success in the regional carnival next Friday in Leeton where they will attempt to qualify to go to the State carnival at the end of term. Thanks to Mrs O'Leary and Miss Turner for taking the students to Deniliquin.



Left: Boy's Swimming Team

Below: Girl's Swimming Team



Cricket

Still on sport, Jorja Daniel (Year Ten) and Jonathon Oliver (Year Eleven) both represented the Riverina at Cricket last week. Jorja was successful in being picked in the NSW CHS second XI. Congratulations to Jorja and Jono on their achievements. Riverina Boys finished 5th and the girls finished 2nd. Well done everyone.

Anti –Bullying Policy Overview

Finley High School has a policy to deal with issues of ongoing harassment and bullying. Teachers deal with issues as they arise in the classroom, but if a student is being repeatedly placed in a position where they are harassed, tormented or threatened, they should report it to a teacher they trust.

The anti-bullying policy states that the teacher, Deputy Principal or Principal will work with the bully initially to educate and impress upon them the hurtful and harmful nature of bullying. The student will be asked to stop the behaviour, and be monitored. The person being bullied will be supported by the teacher who will check on their wellbeing intermittently.

If the bullying continues, the student should **report the incident to the same teacher**, who will then refer the student to the Deputy Principal or Principal who will investigate, interview and where appropriate, place the student on Level 3; which involves monitoring the behaviour of the student for five school days. The person being bullied will continue to be supported by the teacher.

Should further bullying occur, **the student should report directly to the Deputy Principal** or Principal who will investigate the incident and if necessary, take further measures which could include parental interviews, in school or out of school suspensions.

“Tell Them From Me” Survey

The school is participating once again in the “Tell Them From Me” survey in the next few weeks. This survey is open to all students to complete on line. They will answer a series of questions about what it is like to learn at Finley High School. We encourage all students to answer honestly. We did this two years ago and it has given us some terrific data which we are using in developing our school Improvement Plan for the next three years.

All students will bring home a note to inform you more about it. Please read this note carefully and contact the school if you have any concerns. The details are also attached to this newsletter.

Staff Professional Learning

On Tuesday afternoon, all staff stayed at school until 6:15 pm to undertake professional learning. Guest speaker for the afternoon was Jenny Good who talked to staff about the upcoming changes to the school computing network. This will happen for four days starting on March 10th when access to computer technology for students and teachers may be interrupted.

Staff were then taken through their responsibilities surrounding Child Protection Issues which is a mandatory update for them to complete this term.

Finally, I introduced all teachers to ALARM – A Learning and Response Matrix which has been developed by Max Woods from Freshwater High School (Senior Campus). It is designed to assist students to write extended responses in their HSC. We intend to begin to teach the matrix to the senior students, and with more training, implement it across the school as a whole school initiative to improve written responses from our students.

We will have another afternoon set aside in Term Two or Three to further develop our skills as teachers. I would like to thank all the teachers for their support of this initiative.

Today, Veronica McNaught, Vanessa Bush and I are in Albury to further develop our school plan. We hope that by the end of term, we are well on the way to having an improvement plan that will deliver meaningful results for our students.

Helen McRae
Principal

Year Seven Meet the Teachers BBQ

Last Wednesday parents and teachers gathered at the High School for a social barbeque. It was great to get to meet the parents of our new students. Thank-you to all parents and staff who attended the night and helped make the night a success.

Mrs McNamara
Year Seven Advisor

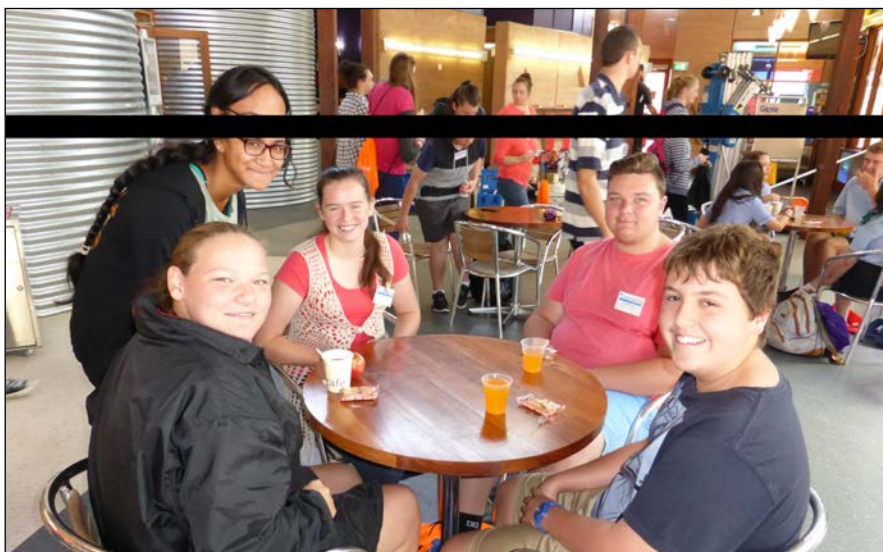
CSU Future Moves Skills Fix Visit

On the 19th February several students from Year Eleven travelled to CSU Thurgoona to participate in a Skills Fix workshop as a part of the Future Moves program. During the day the students participated in a series of workshops including study and exam preparation such as the components of study skills and the learning styles, time management and how to study smarter and finally some relaxation activities. The workshops were run by Careers Personnel and current student CSU leaders. The students also did a campus tour and participated in a video conference on access and equity issues. CSU Future Moves will be back at Finley High School in the next few weeks to work with Years Nine and Ten.



Left: Natalie Pitt, Chelsea Dempster, Joshua Barrett and Tyson Peters at the skill fix workshop

Right: Skills fix lunch Li'i Vitale, Natalie Pitt, Chelsea Dempster, Tyson Peters and Joshua Barrett.



Work Experience

Reminder that, Year Ten students are working on securing placements for work experience in Term Two. Please feel free to contact the Careers staff should you need any assistance with this process.

Opens Boys and Girls Basketball Report

On Thursday the 19th of February Finley High School took an opens boys and girls basketball team to compete in a round robin competition against Barham and Deniliquin. First up was the boys game against Barham. The boys started off slowly in this match and unfortunately fell behind by a large margin in the first half. After a slow start they finally picked up their game in the second half and started to claw their way back into the game with some impressive plays by Lanz DePeralta, Keegan Murphy-Riddell and Sam Orro. Sadly though the lead was too big for them to chase down and they went down in a disappointing 20 point loss 33-13.

It was then the girls turn to bring back some pride for Finley High as they faced off against Barham and they did not disappoint! Led by star players Shania Bentley and Ash O'Leary the team gelled extremely well together and went on to post an impressive score and a convincing victory in their first game! Despite never playing together the girls all worked well together and supported each other in a true team effort. The win meant the girls were only one win away from qualifying for the next round.



Above L-R: Shania Bentley, Paige Nash, Ashleigh O'Leary, Rhiannon Murphy-Riddell, Tayla Boyd, Kristen Holmes, Kylie Wooden and Kitty Lawton.

After being inspired by the girls big win it was the boys chance to turn things around against a much fancied Deniliquin opponent. The game started well with Finley netting the first basket and looking a far better team than the one that played Barham, again led by De Peralta and some strong rebounding from Nick Parker helped out

too. Unfortunately though, the boys were a bit over eager and too many fouls allowed Deniliquin easy points which lead to a Deniliquin victory. The boys held their heads high though in a much better performance.

It was now all on the line for the girls to qualify for the next round. The match against Deniliquin did not disappoint and ended up to be the match of the day! Finley started strong keeping up with their cross town rivals trading points at either end of the court. In a feisty match where the Finley girls lacked experience on the basketball they more than made up for it with heart and determination! Again Ash O'Leary and Shania Bently were instrumental in the sides strong first half and Paige Nash and Rhiannon Murphy-Riddell also stepped up. After some inspirational words at half time the girls came out firing and were ready to step their game up to take it to Deniliquin. After a tense last few minutes and a strategic time out by coach Scott the girls ended up winning a closely hard fought game and qualified to the next level!



Above L-R: Mitchell Gustin, Lanz De Peralta, Jarrod Morham, Keegan Murphy-Riddell, Sam Orro, Ben Montgomery, Nick Parker, Daniel Montgomery and Billy Govan.

The students represented the school at an excellent standard and Coaches Mr Cleal and Miss Scott were very pleased with how they conducted themselves. A big thankyou also goes out to all the parents who transported students to the event and supported the kids on the day.

Year Seven Excursion

In Week 3 our Year 7 students headed to Howmans Gap for a few days of team building and adventure. They did activities such as High Ropes, abseiling, giant swing, canoeing, orienteering and archery. Many conquered their fear of heights, tried new things and made new friends. It was a great few days had by all.





Library News

Thursday
Lunchtimes

Debating
Comic Club

World Book Online

including DECOUVERTE the French
version available to access at
home.

Ask library staff for details

WIN A KINDLE!

Come to the library to pick up your reading
log sheets for the reading competition.

Friday
Lunchtimes

Chess Club

English Extension Short Story – Chloe O'Bryan

I gaze around the airport, small suitcase in my hand. My eyes hurt from holding back tears, and I can see that Dad is doing the same.

How did I end up here? I don't know. I don't know why I've been acting the way I have, or how I went from being a model student to being sent home from school in disgrace. All I know is that my life has changed since my Mother passed away six months ago, and this is the only way I can cope. I know I'm 11 – practically a teenager – but 'toughening up' and getting over it is harder than it sounds.

"This is for the best, Skye," he murmurs.

I look away.

"Nan and Pop are doing this for both of us. The station will be good to clear your head, and the Northern Territory is a beautiful place. We'll both feel better."

Then it's time to board the plane and even though I hug him, even though I know that what he said is true, I can't forget that he is sending me away.

*

Heat. Dust. Dirt Roads. My quiet, old pop and a dark-skinned, chatty girl. This is all I have seen since we left Darwin, on our way to the cattle station that dad used to call home. Pop's ute bumps and sputters along the road, not that this bothers the girl. She hasn't shut up since we left the airport, and doesn't seem to mind that nobody talks back. All pop said when greeting me was that her name is Stella, her parents work on the station and that he thought I would like a friend. As if I'd want to be friends with someone who can talk for three hours and thirty two minutes about *horses*.

Finally, there is a silence. Stella looks at me and smiles.

"You ever been to the station?" she asks.

I shake my head.

"Last time I saw Skye she was eight years old," announces Pop.

I'm startled when he says this. He hasn't said more than three words the whole trip.

"You'll like the station, love. I'll teach you to ride horses and you can help me. There's a ripper waterfall, too, but you'll have to watch out for the crocs."

Great. I can't wait.

*

Finally, we've arrived. The station is huge – it's like we're in the outback one minute, then the next we pass waterfalls, rocks and what Pop calls the 'Roper River'. Fresh water flows one way, and salt water the other.

"That means there are both types of crocodile in there," laughs Stella. I'm not sure if she's joking or not, but all these mentions of crocodiles have me feeling a mixture of unease and excitement.

Nan comes running out of the simple weatherboard house (the only building in sight) to hug us all. She's wearing work boots and the biggest smile I've ever seen.

"I'm so glad to see you," she gushes. "You're going to love it here! Come on, I'll show you your room."

Stella and I follow her to a small room, and I screw my face up. It looks about 100 years old, and even has flowery wallpaper. Gross. I throw open the wardrobe doors, ready to unpack.

It's nearly empty, except for a shoebox, which tumbles down. Stella wrinkles her nose behind a cloud of dust and coughs, but I'm too busy looking at the floor to notice. Pages and pages of writing have fallen out and black and white photos have scattered through the room. As I reach for one, Pop knocks on the door.

"Stella, love, it's time to come" His voice falters as he sees the box, and his face shifts from a smile to a scowl.

"What's this?" his face is hard and drawn as he bends and gathers the papers.

Before I can explain, he has the box in his hands and is leaving.

"Come on Stella. It's time to go."

A limp, a wave from Stella, and I'm alone, wondering what just happened.

*

Pop doesn't mention the box that night or the next day – instead, I learn to ride his horse, Star, and drive around the station. Pop barely speaks, but when he does, every word counts. By the time we get home I am an expert on anthills, fixing fences and, after a brief encounter, the size of freshwater crocodiles. He doesn't tolerate complaining, either; I learn after whining that my water is warm that he won't stand for 'first world problems'.

Dad has called, but I've pretended to be busy. He sent me away from everything I know: from skyscrapers to anthills; from roads to dirt; from millions of people to nobody at all. I know it's a 'first world problem', but I can't forgive him.

During dinner that night, I ask two disastrous questions.

"Pop, what happened to your leg to give you that limp?"

I guess I was expecting a funny story, maybe one in which he fought a crocodile or fell off his horse. Instead, he stops chewing and gives me a hard stare. Nan looks worried, patting his shoulder.

"That's none of your business. My past is my past."

I look at my plate, wondering what I did wrong. Looking to lighten the mood, I try another question.

"What was in that box last night?"

If the first question was bad, this one is worse. Pop clears his throat loudly and pushes his chair back.

"You are not to snoop in my private things. I do not want to hear you ask about that box again, you hear me?"

Nan smiles apologetically, then follows him out. Again, I'm left alone.

*

The next day, Stella and I are on a mission. I've told her about last night and we've decided that there is more to the story. After my first impression, I've decided that I like her. She's a tomboy like me and we have plenty in common, including a sense of adventure and a love of investigations.

We have searched every room in the house, including the pantry, but the box is nowhere to be found. Nan comes in with some water, giving us a knowing look.

"Looking for something, are you?"

There's no point lying. She knows. Stella and I look at one another, then at Nan, who shakes her head.

"Look, kids, sometimes people have stories they don't want to tell. This is one of them. Skye, your Pop has nothing against you. People just deal with pain differently."

I think about my tantrums, closing out my friends, yelling at dad, and getting sent home from school, and I understand what she means. But what, exactly, happened to Pop?

*

Over the next week, I try to forget about the box. Stella is reluctant to give up, but I convince her. I'm really going to miss her when I leave in a few days. I've had more fun with her than my friends back home; yesterday we played backyard cricket for two hours, then swam in the nearby waterfall until we were white and wrinkled. It's more than I can say for my other 'friends', but that's my own fault.

On my last night, Stella's family comes for a barbeque. Pop offers to drive Stella home so that we can finish our card game. When we finish, he emerges from his study carrying a small shoebox.

"I wanted to tell you two a story," he begins, taking a shaky breath. The contents of the box lay on his lap.

"Years and years ago, back in the sixties, there was a war. You're too young to know it, so I won't go into specifics, but young men my age were forced to fight whether we wanted to or not. I was one of them – me and my twin brother and my best friend. We were sent overseas to fight in a war we knew nothing about and that had nothing to do with us, and we paid the price."

He hands us the photo, him and two other men. They look young; they must have only been 20.

“My brother and friend never came back. They called me a lucky one – I have a scar on my leg and can’t talk about what happened over there. There were many more left worse off than me. I’m sorry for shouting at you; this brought back memories I haven’t had in a while.”

I turn to him slowly.

“I’m sorry, Pop,” I breathe.

“It’s not your fault,” he replies. “I just want you to know that people experience pain, but the people around us can pull us through. You might never forget or feel the same again, but you can find your own happiness.”

I feel a hand on my shoulder – it’s Nan. I look at her, Pop and Stella, the family I didn’t know I had. The family who have taught me about being free, having fun, and pulling through different types of pain. I look out the window at the natural beauty of the place that feels so much more like home than the concrete grey of the city.

I’ve come to really love the station – the unfathomable space, the river, the kangaroos and bird calls and horses; so different to the city, where I felt like I was suffocating. I love that I can run without sticking to a path and how unpredictable it is. I think I’ve finally learnt to be free. I’ll miss it, but I’ve learnt from working with Pop that if you leave a fence broken, a whole lot of stuff could escape and create even more trouble. I have more than a few gaps to fill back home.

“Thank you,” I croak.

I’m ready to go home.

CANTEEN ROSTER

Canteen Contact and Number

Mrs Kaylene Dawe 5883 1105

...LADIES, Please note 10am start....

February

27 T Jones, G Gale

March

2 J Russell, S McLean

3 C Alexander

4 J Burdon

5 S Barlow

6 K Arnold, T Simpson

9 H Mortlock, M Kleinschmidt

10 S Robertson

11 D McLean

12 T Anderson

Finley High School P&C AGM

Wednesday 11th March 2015
7pm in the staff common room.

The P&C meet every second
Wednesday of the month.
Everyone is welcome to attend.

Helpers Needed

The P&C are involved in raising funds for the school by catering for the St Joseph's 100 year reunion dinner on Saturday 7th March. Organisers anticipate 250 – 300 people to be in attendance. We therefore need parents, friends and students to help with food preparation and service in order to get the food out as quickly as possible. We require helpers at Finley High School hospitality room from 5pm or St Joseph's hall from 7pm. If you are able to assist, please contact Suzanne Robertson as soon as possible on: 0358859229 or 0417405107

The P&C are also catering for the Finley Cricket Club Presentation Dinner at the clubrooms on Saturday 28th March. We will require helpers on the night, also donation of slices would be appreciated. If any parents can assist please contact Suzanne Robertson on: 0358859229 or 0417405107

Finley High School – 2015 Summer Menu

	Rolls	Sandwiches	Tubs of Salad	
Chicken Salad	\$4.50	\$4.20	Roast Chicken	\$4.20
Ham Salad	\$4.00	\$3.40	Ham	\$3.70
Tuna Salad	\$4.30	\$3.80	Tuna	\$4.20
Salad (no meat)	\$4.00	\$3.40	Salad (no meat)	\$3.70
Tuna	\$3.70	\$3.70	Extra beetroot, mayo and carrot	\$0.40
Roast Chicken	\$3.70	\$3.70		
Ham	\$3.20	\$3.20		
Cheese	\$2.40	\$2.40		
Tomato	\$2.20	\$2.20		
Egg/Curried	\$2.20	\$2.20		
Vegemite	\$1.70	\$1.70		
Peanut Butter	\$1.70	\$1.70		
Ham and Cheese	\$3.40	\$3.40		
Buttered	\$1.40			
 Wraps				
Roast Chicken	\$4.50			
Ham	\$4.00			
 Hot				
Chicken Burger	\$4.80			
Hot Dogs	\$3.50			
+ Cheese	\$3.80			
Chicken Wrap	\$4.20			
 Toasted sandwiches				
Ham and cheese	\$3.50			
Cheese	\$3.00			
			 Recess	
			Cheesemite	\$2.80
			Cheese and bacon rolls	\$1.20
			Hedgehog (Mon-Fri) small	\$1.40
			large	\$2.80
			Coffee Scrolls (Tues & Thurs)	\$2.00
			Apple Slice (Tues & Thurs)	\$2.80
			Vanilla Slice (Wed)	\$2.80
			Large flavoured milk	\$3.60
			Long life flavoured milk	\$2.00
			Large orange juice	\$2.00
			Small orange juice	\$1.50
			Medium orange and mango juice	\$1.20
			Flavoured drink large	\$2.50
			Water	\$1.50
			Plain milk	\$1.50
			Sport Water	\$2.00
			 Chew Bars – at lunch time	 \$1.00
			JJ's (flavoured) & Chips	\$1.00



Community Announcements

Free Dental Treatment

For all children 0 to 18 years old. All you need is a Medicare card. To register for treatment at Deniliquin or Berrigan Dental Clinic please phone 1800 45 00 46. 1st visit recommended at 2yrs of age, Dental teams no longer visit schools for check-ups so call 1800450046 for all inquiries or appointments.

Jerilderie Tennis Club

Term One Tennis Competition will commence Monday 2nd March at 6:30pm and run for four weeks. Players need to be members of the tennis club, \$33 per annum for adult membership, light/ball fees \$8 (\$2 per week). Names and enquiries to Rozie Kennett on 0427 861 772.

Community Transport

A new community transport service for the Berrigan and Jerilderie Shires will commence operating on the 5th and 19th of February 2015 and continue on the first and third Thursday of month. The bus will pick up from Jerilderie, Berrigan, Finley, Tocumwal, Barooga and arrive at Cobram at 10.50am, it will then leave Cobram at 2.30pm for the return journey. The cost is \$10 for the return trip and bookings are essential. For more information contact: Lockhart & District Community Services Phone 02 6920 4162.

Cobram Amateur Basketball Association 2015 Autumn Registration Nights

Registrations for the Autumn 2015 season will be held on Monday 16th February and Tuesday 24th February from 6pm to 7pm at the Cobram Sports Stadium Campbells Road for juniors and adults. The season is planned to start the week of the 2nd March 2015.

Registrations this season will again be done online and payment of fees will be via credit card at time of registration. Cost is \$60 for all players, which includes \$40 for BVC affiliation and insurance. For more information regarding registrations please contact Rod Armstrong on 0418 148 942 or email jenrod@bigpond.net.au

Free skill sessions will also be offered for younger children on Tuesday nights. This is aimed at children aged 6-9 years of age who are not playing, but is open to all children playing in the junior competition who may want to improve their skills. If anyone is interested please respond to Rod Armstrong via email or phone.

Uarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre Presents 3 v 3 Basketball Competition

On the 28th February, 10 am at the Deniliquin Sports Stadium, Deniliquin will be hosting an inaugural 3 vs 3 basketball competition.

- Registration is free (closes 13th February),
- ages 16 + for the basketball games
- There will be a 12 – 16 age comp for the younger kids.
- For more information contact Jake on 5881 3312

AFS Intercultural Programs Australia

AFS are currently looking for families to host exchange students. Please contact Fiona Burton on 0417 325 915 for more information regarding these students.

Goulburn Valley Football Umpires Association

Umpiring Australian Rules Football as a field, goal or boundary is a most rewarding experience. Girls and boys are most welcome. If you would like to have a try at umpiring please call now and we will send an information package out to you.

Greg Sidebottom 0419 154 097 or 5831 5121 or email sidebott@bigpond.net.au

Australian Air Force Cadets (AAFC)

419 Squadron, Australian Air Force Cadets are holding an information and recruitment night on Friday 6th of March 2015 at 6:45pm to 9:30pm at 110 Sobraon Street Shepparton.

For more information please call Barry Spencer on 0417 532 275

Time 4 Me

For parents and carers of children aged 0 – 8 years. A project of Finley Uniting Church in partnership with Berrigan Shire Early Intervention Service. Pop in anytime between 9am and 11am every 1st and 3rd Monday of the month at Finley Uniting Church Hall, corner of Coree and Wollomai Streets Finley.

Your children are welcome under your supervision and care. We have plenty of indoor and outdoor secure play space and really cool air-conditioning. We can make you a good espresso coffee, tea or hot chocolate for a gold coin donation. If your children come along, can you please provide them something to eat.



Meet 3 of our newest stallholders, Jessica Lock, Riley Nolan and Manaia Joseph.

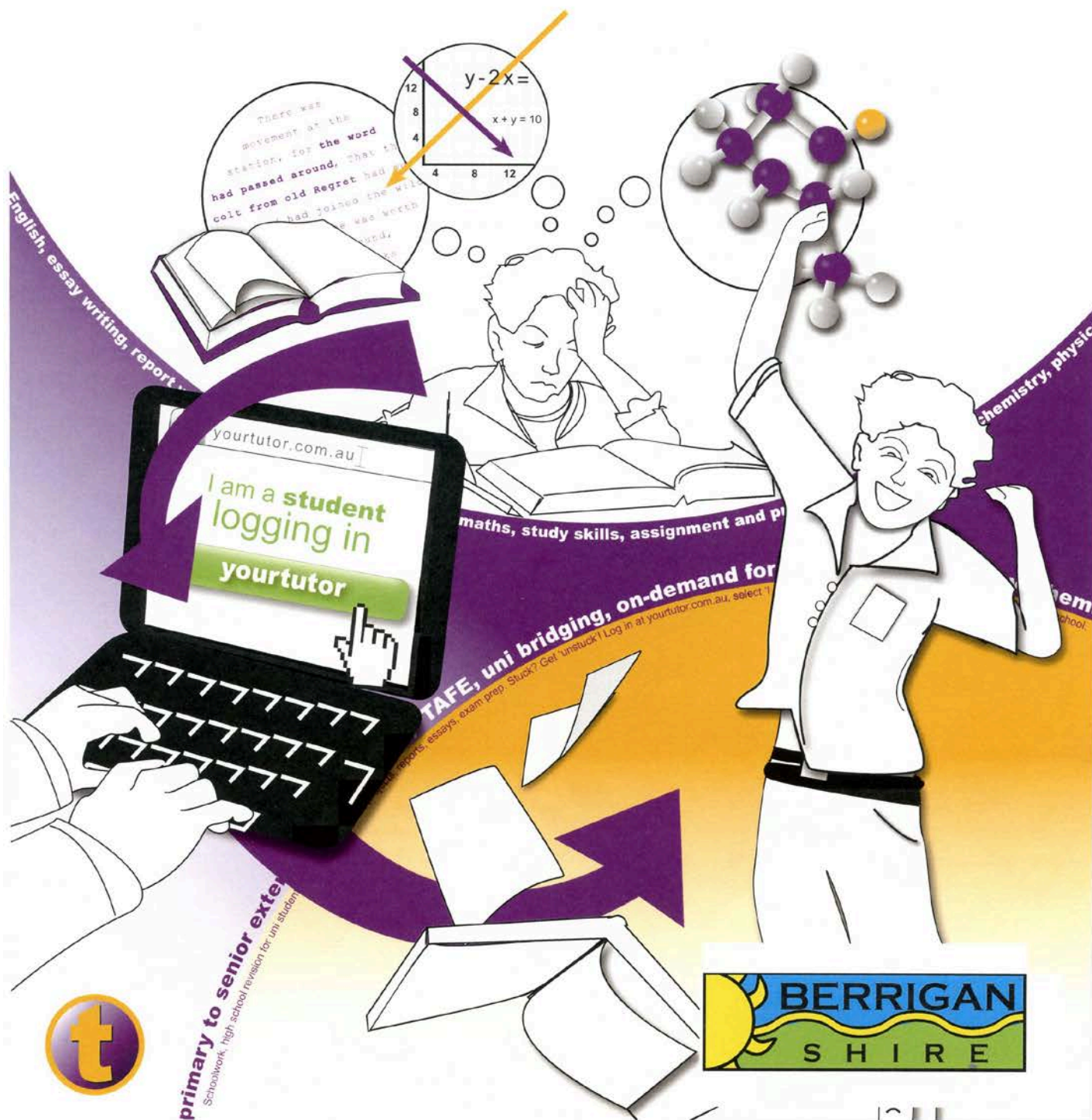
Visit them at the next market, on Saturday 7th March to see what they do there.



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**JERILDERIE PUBLIC SCHOOL P & C INVITES YOU TO
JERILDERIE RACECOURSE SUN 1st MARCH 2015
FIND Billabong Bog Run ON FACEBOOK**

**JUNIORS
8-14 YEARS
\$30pp PREPAID
\$40pp AFTER
13th FEB
OPEN
15 YEARS +
\$60pp
PREPAID
\$80pp
AFTER 13TH FEB**



**APPROX 6KM
OF VARIOUS
OBSTACLES
ENTER AS
A TEAM OR
INDI-
VIDUAL
FOR MORE
INFO
CONTACT
KEVIN**

**GATES OPEN 8-30 AM
FIRST GROUP RUNS
9-00 AM**

**0428 998 801
TIFFANY 0423 075 060
billabongbogrun@
hotmail.com**

BILLABONG BOG RUN

*Group prices for 5 or more people:
Juniors \$20 each and open \$40 each.*



Tell Them From Me Student Feedback Survey

Frequently Asked Questions (parents and carers)

Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation

What is the *Tell Them From Me* student survey?

The *Tell Them From Me* student survey asks questions about factors that are known to affect academic achievement and other outcomes. It aims to help improve the learning outcomes of students.

The survey is designed to measure, assess and report insights at the school and system levels. The focus of this NSW survey is on student wellbeing, engagement and effective teaching practices.

What kind of questions will the survey ask?

The survey will ask students questions about:

Participation in Sports	Homework Behaviour	Expectations for Success
Positive Learning Climate	Participation in Clubs	Behaviour at School
Experiences of being Bullied	Truancy	Sense of Belonging
Interest and Motivation	Effective Learning Time	Aspirations: finishing Year 12, University, TAFE
Positive Relationships	Effort	Teaching Relevance
Feelings of worry or sadness	Valuing school outcomes	Skills and learning challenge
Teaching Rigour	Advocacy at school	Advocacy outside school
Positive Teacher-Student Relations		

How have schools been selected to take part?

The survey is open for all NSW government schools to participate in at no cost to them. Your school has taken up this offer.

How will taking part in this survey benefit my child's school?

The *Tell Them From Me* student survey will provide school principals and school leaders with insight into student engagement, wellbeing and effective teaching practices at their school, from the perspective of students.

Data collected from the survey responses are quickly compiled into reports for school leaders. Principals can then use this information to help them identify emerging issues and plan for school improvement.

What does my child need to do to participate in the survey?

The survey typically takes less than 30 minutes and is conducted entirely online through a secure website operated by the survey developers, The Learning Bar. Schools will make computers or laptops available so that students can complete the survey during school hours.

Does my child have to participate?

No, participation in the survey is optional. Your child will not take part if either you or your child do not wish to. If, during the survey, your child is uncomfortable answering any question, he/she should leave it blank and move on to the next one. Your child can stop the survey at any time. Parents/students have a right to apply for access to, and correction of, a student's information.

Will the school be able to identify my child from their responses?

Staff in schools will not be able to identify individual students from their responses. To ensure confidentiality, participating students will receive a unique username and password. Where fewer than five students respond to a question, the results will not be made available.

A small number of staff in the Department's Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (CESE) will have access to individual student responses for the purpose of state-wide analysis. Individual students' data will be held on a secure server with access strictly limited to CESE researchers. The researchers are interested in trends only – not in individual student responses. Individual students and schools will not be identified in any CESE publication.

What sort of analysis will be done on the survey data?

Once the surveys are completed by students, reports are prepared and in most cases are available to schools within three business days. School leaders may use the data to better understand the experiences and views of students at their school.

CESE will undertake state-wide analysis of the survey data in conjunction with existing student data held by the Department, including performance data. The results will help all schools better understand the relationship between wellbeing, engagement, effective teaching and student learning. Results from CESE's analysis of this data will also help teachers and principals discuss what works to improve student outcomes. This supports the Department's continuing focus on quality teaching and leadership. The data will be retained for future analysis to help us better understand the nature of student engagement and wellbeing over time.

Can all school students participate in the survey?

Schools are encouraged to allow as many students as possible in Years 7 to 12 to participate.

When will the *Tell Them From Me* survey happen?

The surveys will be conducted in all participating schools between Monday 9 March and Thursday 2 April 2015 (Weeks 7-10 of Term 1).

What is the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (CESE)?

CESE is part of the Department of Education and Communities. It has been established to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of education in NSW.

CESE will identify and share what works, creating new opportunities to improve teaching and learning across all education sectors.

What is The Learning Bar and what is their role?

The Learning Bar is an international education company, with offices in Australia and Canada, that specialises in school surveys and student assessments. They have been contracted by the Department to run the surveys for NSW public schools. Its survey, *Tell Them From Me*, is the largest national school survey in Canada, used in nine of Canada's ten provinces. More than 2,600 schools and 1.7 million Canadian students have participated in the survey over the last nine years.

The Learning Bar has conducted surveys in Australia before, with schools helping to adapt surveys, ensuring they are appropriate to an Australian context. For purely administrative purposes, The Learning Bar will also have temporary access to identifiable student responses to the survey questions. Other than The Learning Bar and CESE researchers within the Department, identifiable student responses will not be disclosed to any other person or body other than as required by law.

More information about The Learning Bar is available at: www.thelearningbar.com.



Contact Details

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