



Cartoon: Charlotte Rowland

## One size approach doesn't fit all roads

### EDITORIAL

By **ARIANE JUCHAU, LILY PATRICK** and **KELSEY DARE**

SCHOOL zones can be fraught with danger. In May 2014, a vehicle in a school zone in South Penrith hit an eight-year-old boy. He was the fifth child to be injured by a vehicle in a school zone that week.

On Walk to School Day in 2014, the *Daily Telegraph* recorded 57 vehicles speeding in one school zone within 30 minutes.

The statistics are alarming and despite recommendations to improve safety around schools many do not have adequate safety crossings, crossing supervisors, flashing school zone signs or cameras to monitor school zones.

Belair Public School lacks adequate safety crossings, signage and a crossing supervisor. According to the Newcastle City Council the school does not meet their one-size-fits-all criteria. This criteria needs to change.

If you travel through the school zones outside most schools in Newcastle you will come across a children's crossing or a combined zebra and children's crossing. They do not ensure that drivers will stop or slow down, therefore crossing guards are a necessity to ensure that cars stop for children.

Belair has more than 500 students and is located where traffic is a constant in narrow streets. However, there is no crossing guard. Children are forced to cross busy, congested streets with poor visibility without assistance.

There is one children's crossing located on Terence Street. This is not a zebra crossing and it does not force cars to stop. In fact, many drive through without pause for pedestrians or slowing down to the legal speed limit.

At the other entrance to the school, on Carolyn Street, there is no crossing at all. When questioned about the lack of safe crossing a council spokesperson said that the other streets "are not suitable for crossing facilities."

P&C Secretary Christina Price said "We have been fighting for a crossing supervisor for 15 years. In that time there have been a number of accidents involving kids and vehicles."

Newcastle City Council choose to apply the criteria set down by the Roads and Maritime Service which means for a site to be eligible for a school-crossing supervisor it must meet criteria that includes 50 pedestrians and 300 cars per hour.

It is hard to believe that Belair does not meet this criteria. Even so, what is more important? Meeting a criteria or the safety of children?

# A recipe for success



Zane Butterworth and Cassie Allen battle it out at chess, while other students spend their lunchtime playing sport.

Picture: Kealey Carroll-Milne

By **JAXON ABDILLA, RUSH WISLANG, ALEX NICHOLSON** and **ELIJAH STONE**

BELAIR Public School students' are successful in sport, academics and creative and performing arts. Each year students represent the school at zone, regional, state and national levels.

The cricket, basketball, netball, swimming and soccer teams have all competed at regional or state. The chess team has competed at a state level and the school band, choir and dance groups have achieved recognition for outstanding performances in competition.

In 2015, the futsal team will play in the state competition for the third year running. A number of the

players in the Belair team have also been selected to play for Australia and Jaxon Abdilla is travelling to Japan to play.

The school band have competed and succeeded in a number of Band Fest Competitions. Band conductor, Graham Lamond said, "The reason the band members do so well at Band Fest is because they work hard, practice and count."

Emma Hopkins is an example of a student that exceeds in all areas. She claims her success is "just luck". Teacher, Matthew Baker, says: "Emma is successful because she is a hard worker with commitment and a good attitude."

For four years, Emma has represented the state in athletics, swimming, cross country, basketball, touch football and netball. She has

represented the school at regional public speaking, is in the school debating team, is a school prefect and in the Opera House choir.

In 2014 Emma was awarded the Hunter Academy of Sport Primary Achievement Award to recognise her exceptional sporting achievement.

Principal, Warwick Beard believes "our sporting teams succeed as we have a dedicated school community, committed students and willing helpful staff. The school does well in academics and other areas for the same reasons. The teachers enter students into competitions and build teams from students within school. The most important thing is to offer students these extra-curricular opportunities."

## Our students need room to move safely

By **ISABELLA LOADES, MATTHEW JACKSON** and **DAWN DYSON**

THE school population at Belair Public School has grown in the last 10 years. The school drop-off and pick-up is nightmarish as parents fight for parks with each other, residents and employees at the nearby shopping centre.

The congestion surrounding the school is a major safety concern for students who are not always aware of the dangers around them.

Belair P & C Association

Representative, Christina Price, said the parking was "disgraceful" and it was terribly hard to find a park anywhere around the school. With no crossing guard and such heavy traffic an accident could easily happen.

Belair principal, Warwick Beard, has been pushing for changes and is happy that there is now a kiss and ride zone, as it is safer for children and parents because there is less



The scene on Terence Street at the end of a school day. Picture: Kealey Carroll-Milne

double parking.

He also mentioned that the zone should be getting an extension soon, a new

crossing across the driveway and a new gate at Terence Street for safer access for students.

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