

# Use your power, but don't abuse it

## EDITORIAL

By **BRITNEE ATTENBOROUGH**

**SUPERMAN** is a fictional character with superpowers and perfect ability in everything he does.

But in reality, there are many people living in this world with a disability.

Our classroom teacher has battled through life with cerebral palsy. He has a disability that everyone can see and hear. Our school principal still suffers pain from a broken back two years ago. Many suffer with asthma, allergies and wear glasses.

Year 5 student Eliza has recently been diagnosed with diabetes and has made adjustments in her lifestyle to cope with this.

Everybody in the world today has some sort of disability, after all, nobody is perfect.

Some people have trouble concentrating in class, others talk a lot, some people have bad attitudes and others bully other students about their imperfections.

It is sometimes acceptable to have a bad day or not be at your best, these are things that can be fixed easily.

There is however, one thing that cannot be accepted – bullying. A bully is when someone uses their power to upset or hurt someone

else. You may have done this to someone yourself or know of someone who has.

In most cases, the bully has their own insecurities, or they are being bullied by someone else and that is why they bully. This doesn't make it acceptable.

We think it is the bullies who suffer the disability. Sometimes, bullying can start out as a joke where everybody, including the victim, laughs, but can then escalate into something worse, and the joke then becomes bullying.

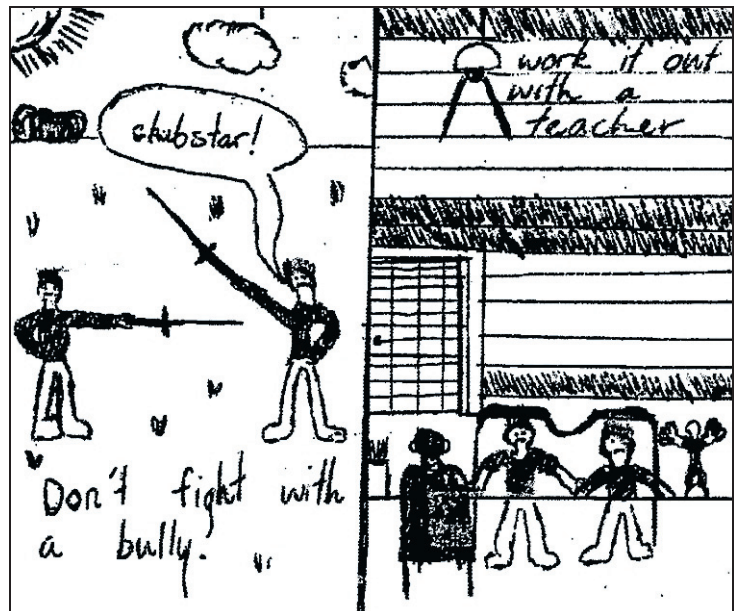
Although we do not believe there is a lot of bullying at St Joseph's, the school is working on a number of ways to eradicate it completely.

Last year the school hosted a performance from Tony Bones called "The Bully Bull-Ring". This gave victims of bullying a number of strategies to use when they felt they were being bullied. These strategies included: get back in the pack, camouflage, rise above it, and don't make snap decisions.

The strategies focused on confidence, resilience and organisation, and have been incorporated into the school on a daily basis.

Not everybody can be Superman but we can all choose how to treat others.

Like Superman, bullies can possess powers over others, but unlike Superman bullies abuse this power. Superman only used his powers for good.



Cartoon: Clancy Moore

# Being diabetic in a rural area

By **ELIZA PEEBLES**

**LIVING** with diabetes isn't easy, especially when you get diagnosed at eight years of age. It can be a big learning curve.

Add to this stress is living in Merriwa – a 2½-hour drive to the John Hunter Children's Hospital where the diabetes doctors, educators, dietitians and social workers are located.

This is reality for Eliza Peebles, but she is determined not to let diabetes stop her.

She loves to dance, swim, ride motorbikes, attend martial arts classes and doing what every other 10-year-old does.

Eliza said: "It has not always been an easy ride, but with the support of my family and all the help I get from the John Hunter Hospital Diabetes Team, I feel that I can successfully live with diabetes."

"I'm very proud of the way Eliza copes and deals with her diabetes and knows that it won't stop her doing whatever she likes in life," her mother Anne Marie said.

Eliza feels the most frustrating thing about living with diabetes is the lack of understanding people have of the condition.



To help this situation, Eliza has been involved with educating others around her, including her classmates and the local community. Recently she gave a presentation at the local Rotary meeting.

**CHALLENGE:** Eliza Peebles with her Medtronic insulin pump.

Picture: Tamasy McNaught

# Sprouting a love of all that's novel

By **BRITNEE ATTENBOROUGH** and **TAMASYN McNAUGHT**

**THE** name Little Sprouts comes from the motto "Plant the seed to read".

Little Sprouts Day in Merriwa started in 2007. On this day each year, students celebrate reading by going around to public places and participating in exciting activities.

Students from St Joseph's Primary School, Merriwa Central School, Cassilis Public School, Sandy Hollow Public School and Merriwa Preschool gather for entertainment, activities and reading with Reggie the Redback Spider: the mascot for the day, and other community members.

This year, about 250 children, 40 businesses and 50 community members were involved on the day.

Highlights included bush poet Gregory North, sharing books and artwork from Merriwa locals Anne and Tony Bishop, and former Australian rugby league winger Adam McDougall sharing his love of reading.

According to Glen Kite from Merriwa Central School, the day is about making reading more fun and accessible to children of all ages.

"Little Sprouts is... aimed at promoting reading to young children in an effort to increase literacy levels," he said.

# Oliver steers towards his bull riding goal

By **OLIVER TOWELL, BAILEY TELFER** and **TY RILEY**

**THE** National Finals for Rodeo were held in Tamworth from January 19-21, organised by the ABCRA (Australian Bushmen's Campdraft and Rodeo Association).

St Joseph's Merriwa student Oliver Towell participated at this event in the eight-to-11-year-old steer ride.

It was an awesome experience for Oliver and he did his family and the local community proud by finishing in fourth place.

"It was a pleasure to be there and do my best," Oliver said.

Oliver started rodeo in 2010, aged nine. He learnt the necessary skills from his neighbours Tim, Cliff, Lachlan, and Eric Richardson, as well as his father Josh. He also attended the Brad Scott Bull and Steer Riding School over two weekends.

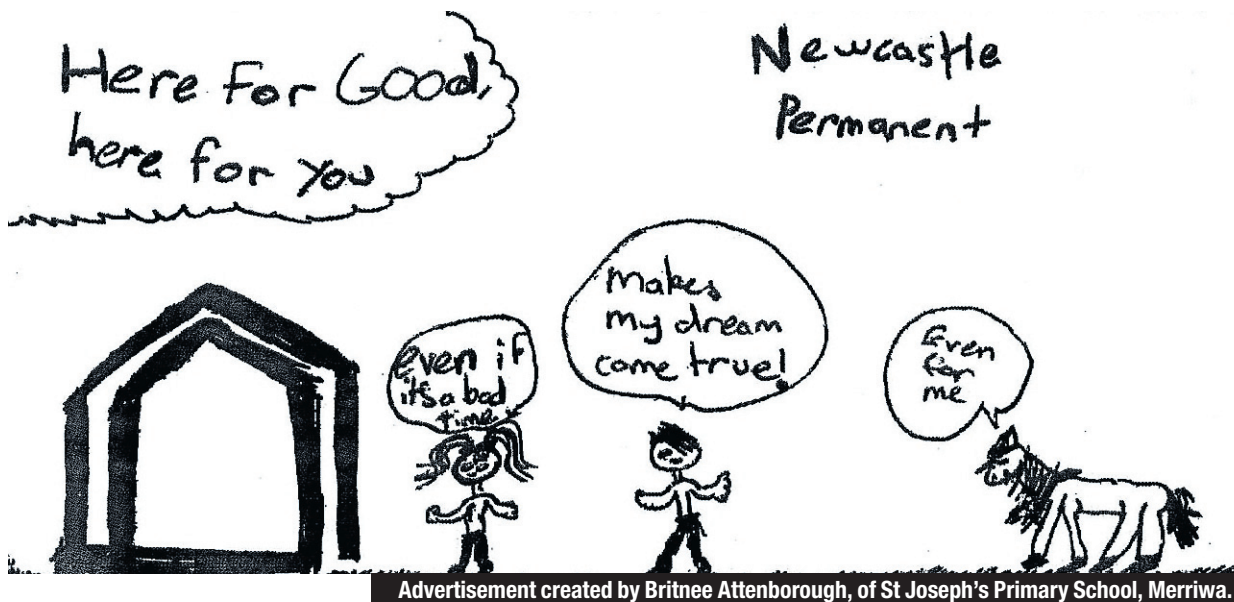
"Brad Scott showed me the benefits of being fit and physically prepared," Oliver said.

He would like to continue rodeo and hopes to one day compete on the Pro Rodeo Circuit.



**HOLD ON TIGHT:** Oliver Towell in action at Muswellbrook.

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