

MERRYLANDS WEST

Students don footy colours to help mate

School community gets behind event for Fight Cancer Foundation

Warren Thomson

STUDENTS will rally behind their school captain and mate Brendan Upsall by dressing up in their favourite footy colours at Sherwood Grange Public School on Friday.

It will be part of Footy Colours Day, which will raise money for the Fight Cancer Foundation.

The foundation supports Brendan, and many other children, by helping young patients continue their education during long absences from school during treatment for cancer.

The 11-year-old was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia in October 2014, and will continue to be treated with chemotherapy until the end of the year.

Brendan's mother Janelle said it was fantastic to see the school support the cause.

"It's good to know he has support out there," Ms Upsall said.

"When he was diagnosed, I didn't know about Fight Cancer Foundation, who help the kids keep in contact with school in some form.

"It helped Brendan quite a lot, as he missed out on school last year.

"He was voted in as a

school captain, which is quite a bit of work, but he enjoys it. It means a lot to him."

The school will host a longest-kick competition and an afternoon tea.

Western Sydney Wanderers, who have supported Brendan and had him walk out with the team during last season's home derby, are planning to visit the Merrylands school to get involved.

Wanderers player and Footy Colours Day ambassador Shannon Cole met Brendan recently, and was confident he, and a lot of his schoolmates, would turn up to school in red and black.

"He is an amazing kid. He was so happy and positive - it was inspiring," Cole said.

"I feel like (Footy Colours Day) is something everyone should get behind. To show support for children with cancer and their families is the least we can all do."

Brendan said hearing he was an inspiration to Cole "gives me a lot of confidence to keep going".

"He taught me some soccer skills, asked how I was and we had a kick around," Brendan said.

Brendan added he would be wearing his Wanderers shirt to school on Friday.

•Details: fightcancer.org.au



Sherwood Grange Public School students are supporting captain Brendan Upsall (centre). Picture: Robert Pozo