

Principal's Post – 14 September 2017

Dear Parents and members of our school community,

School Athletics Carnival

I know that there will be many parents and other relatives coming tomorrow to enjoy our St Jerome's Athletics Carnival. We will open the vacant block to provide extra parking but based upon previous years, there will be many cars parked in Troode Street and other surrounding streets. PLEASE respect our neighbours and do not park across anyone's driveway. I also suggest that since it is going to be a gloriously sunny day, you might consider walking from home or parking your car a short way from school such as Santich park or the shopping centre. The students are very excited about the carnival and they have been enthusiastic at the preliminary events which have been held all through this week.

Our recent Open Night was an opportunity for families to wander through all the classrooms. It can be difficult to judge a teacher based upon the visual effects of work on display, various charts and the general classroom set up. Is it a better room for learning because it looks bright and colourful, often with things strung across the room and work on the windows as well?

In fact, we are so used to the idea that a primary school classroom should have colourful drawings, crafts on display, educational charts and maps covering the walls, that we fail to consider if this may cause sensory overload in some children. A recent study has found that for young children, adopting a more subdued approach, is better. The study, published in May 2014 in Psychological Science, was one of the first to examine how decorations impact learning. It found that when kindergartners (equivalent to our Pre Primary students) were taught in a highly decorated classroom, they were more distracted and scored lower on tests than when they were taught in a room with bare walls.

Researchers at Carnegie Mellon University followed a group of 24 kindergartners taught in two simulated classrooms: one with bare walls, the other decorated with commercial materials like presidential photos, science posters and maps, as well as the children's artwork.

During the lessons, children sat on carpet squares in a semicircle facing the teacher, who read aloud from a picture book. They participated in six lessons of five-to seven-minutes each in which the teacher read aloud on topics such as plate tectonics, the Solar System and bugs. After each lesson, the children took multiple-choice picture tests. Lessons were observed and videotaped to monitor how often the children were focused on the teacher or "off task," distracted by themselves, other students or the visual environment.

In the sparse classroom, the kindergartners got distracted by other students or even themselves. But in the decorated one, children were more likely to be distracted by the visual environment and spent far more time "off task."

Anna V. Fisher, the study's lead author and an associate psychology professor, said the findings showed that the classroom environment can be distracting and negatively impact learning. But, due to the study's small size and controlled setting, further research is needed.

We continue to follow such research with interest as we want to create rooms that are most conducive to learning.

Helen M O'Toole

Helen O'Toole
Principal



P & F News

Thanks to the generosity of our families and the hard work of volunteers, the P & F have recently made the following donations to the school: -

August

\$11,899 was returned to the school including two TV's, and outdoor benches. The Kindy area received new outdoor equipment.

September

\$2124.90. Outdoor play kitchens for PP and Kindy areas, Lego STEM kits and a 360deg video action camera and tripod.

The Father's Day raffle, resulted in a profit of \$1221, for the P & F. Thank you to all that participated.

Thank you very much to all the families that are supporting the Earn and Learn stickers. This is ending during the school holidays so please make sure all sheets and stickers are handed to the office by the end of term.

Fathers' Golf Day. It is now time for dads, grandfathers or even uncles to dust off their golf clubs and register at this link <https://www.trybooking.com/book/event?embed&eid=310317>

This event is to be held on the **15 October 2017**. The cost includes 18 holes, cart hire and lunch. All levels of golfing abilities welcome; playing in teams is a great way for the dads to get to know each other.

Car Boot Sale – 21 October 2017

Some stalls have been booked but we are looking for more, so if you are planning on a spring clean out you can turn your unwanted items into cash. Perhaps you run or work for a business, big or small, that would like to participate? Or are you involved with a sporting club or organisation that is wanting an opportunity to be active in our community? Please register a stall or contact us if you would like more information.

To book a stall please register by returning completed form into office or via this link <https://www.trybooking.com/book/event?embed&eid=310322>

We will have a coffee and ice-cream van available and also hold a sausage sizzle on the day. We are in need of some chefs to run the BBQ, so if you can spare an hour or two, and are an excellent snag cooker who wants to support our children please contact us. We would love to hear from you.

Our P & F Facebook page is a great way to stay connected with happenings around the school.

We are posting each Monday what's happening at the school that week.

Please make sure you have 'liked' our Facebook page.

Alternatively if you prefer you can email us at pandf@stjeromes.wa.edu.au

Our next P & F meeting will be held on **Tuesday 10th October** and we would love to see a few new faces!!!!

The P & F Committee 2017.