



The Kindy and Pre-Primary boys enjoying the new water pump.

#### Reflections on the Coronavirus

A few reflections this week as we all grapple with the unprecedented coronavirus situation:

#### Parenting Tips in Uncertain Times

I think most parents, myself included, are really unsure about how to speak to our own children about this pandemic, in a way that will comfort and reassure them, rather than worrying them further. Some of the following tips might be helpful:

1. **Reassure your children that your family is your top priority.** Say something like "I'm your parent, it's my job to keep you safe and we are doing everything we can."
2. **Maintain everyday family routines.** Keep to usual times, mealtimes, and bedtimes. Every family is different. Involve children in working out any new routine.
3. **Have plenty of interesting things to do at home.** Busy children are less likely to be bored and misbehave. With your child, help create a list of 20 activities that will keep them busy (not just screen time).
4. **Take notice of behaviour you like.** Think about the values, skills and behaviours you wish to encourage in your children at this very difficult time. There are many opportunities to teach your children important life skills (e.g. being caring, helpful, cooperative, taking turns, getting on well with siblings). Use plenty of praise and positive attention to encourage behaviour you like.



"Strength through Christ"

*Respect  
Compassion  
Safety  
Responsibility*  
1 April 2020

5. **Make sure your child knows you are ready to talk.** Children need to be able to talk to parents about their concerns and have their questions answered. When a child wants to talk about their feelings, stop what you are doing and listen carefully. Avoid telling children how they should feel ("That's silly. You shouldn't be scared about that.") Let children know it is ok to be worried. Talking or drawing can help children get in touch with their feelings and figure out what they are anxious about.
6. **Be truthful in answering children's questions.** Find out what they know about the issue before answering. Keep answers simple. Get information from trusted sources rather than social media.
7. **Have a family plan of action.** Involve children in preparing the plan. As situations can change quickly, update the plan as needed.
8. **Help children learn to tolerate more uncertainty.** The COVID-19 crisis creates uncertainty for everyone. Parents need to find a way to accept uncertainty and, through your actions and words show this acceptance to your children.
9. **Take care of yourself the best you can.** Deal with your own distress by taking actions that give you a better sense of personal control. Stress management skills like mindfulness and deep breathing can help reduce stress. Avoid behaviour that might increase your stress, like constantly and excessively checking your screens for updates.
10. **Reach out and connect with loved ones.** Make an extra effort to keep in touch with family, friends and neighbours. Help others who are in need or who are more vulnerable.



The importance of faith

I never thought I would see a time when people are unable to physically attend Sunday Mass, but that is the situation we find ourselves in. Hopefully, like me, you are able to be comforted during this difficult time by our faith that God is always with us, especially so during a time of crisis. Don't forget the power of prayer throughout the challenges we face. Our school motto, 'Strength through Christ' is particularly apt during this time. I believe that most people are stronger than they realise and I have no doubt that Jesus will bring out the best of us as we support each other through the pandemic.

Thank you to the staff

They would probably be aghast if they knew I was writing this, as they are an extremely humble bunch, but I think we all need to take a moment to thank the staff of this great school. At all times, they have suppressed their own anxieties and placed the needs of the children and the school well above their own personal needs. They have come to school each day throughout this crisis with optimism, energy, commitment and adaptability and I know I am the envy of many other principals who have not always had quite the same response from their staff. If you have the opportunity, I encourage you to thank them personally for their professionalism and service to the school.

Thank you to the community

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge all our families who, without exception, have been patient, understanding, calm and sensible throughout this crisis so far. Our families are a pleasure to work with and we look forward to normality one day returning. Until then, please keep supporting the school as you always do.

Parent/Teacher Interviews

Thank you to those parents who attended their Parent/Teacher Interview on Monday or engaged in a phone conversation with the teacher. If you have not yet been able to meet with the teacher, I encourage you to get in touch with them to arrange a mutually suitable time.

New Water Pump

Thank you to Mr. Hill for his work in installing the water pump in our early childhood play area- the kids are loving it so far! We look forward to continuing to develop our nature play area, with the building of a riverbed for the water pump, planting of some shady trees and other improvements.

Assessment Books and Portfolios

Due to the coronavirus pandemic and a number of students being unable to attend school in recent weeks, Assessment Books and Portfolios will not go home next week as originally scheduled. Thanks for your understanding.

Community Service Activities Cancelled

In a previous newsletter, there was information regarding students participating in community service activities to replace the Easter Raffle on the last day of this term. Sadly, due to the coronavirus pandemic, we have had to cancel these activities. Thank you for your understanding.

Maintaining Contact With the School During the COVID-19 Crisis

As a school community, I am very confident that we will work together to do all that we can, to navigate the COVID-19 crisis with the well-being and learning of our students as key priorities at all times. It will be essential that you keep yourself informed as to plans the school makes for the coming weeks. Please frequently monitor your email account and our school Facebook page for important communications. Don't hesitate to phone the school during office hours or to contact me via email at any time: [brett.wilkie@cewa.edu.au](mailto:brett.wilkie@cewa.edu.au)

New Music Programme

I am very excited to introduce a new Music programme this year at St. Joseph's. Even though each class has only enjoyed a couple of lessons of music before the changes to school attendance this week, I think we've made a great start! Next term will be very interesting as we move to online learning - I am looking forward to 'seeing' a few parents singing along with their kids during our video conferencing sessions!

While following the West Australian Music Curriculum the students will explore ideas through making and representing music and exploring improvisation. They will develop skills and processes relating to the elements of music including tempo, pitch, dynamics, form, timbre and texture. They will then share their learning and ideas through performance, presentation or display. The students will develop skills to be able to interpret and respond in various ways to music they listen to and make.

Our first focus in Week 7 was to introduce the music class routines and expectations and an overview of what they will be learning, while settling into our cosy new music corner in the library. The students were introduced to the 'elements of music', their music colour groups to assist with organisation and singing tasks, and the music word wall. As we sequentially progress through the music curriculum and learn new terms and skills related to each element of music, we will add these to the music word wall.

We moved straight into lots of singing! The older classes learned their 'welcome songs', adding body percussion to demonstrate beat and rhythm and during a combined lesson, the Year 5/6 class sang their 'Wanju, My Friend' welcome song. At the same time the Year 3/4 class sang their 'Hello and Howdy' song to create their first 'canon'. The well-known 'Banana Boat Song' has been fun to learn with some great calypso style moves being created.

Our first skill to work on was differentiating beat, which is steady and strong, and rhythm which follows the words or the melody. The older students explored this in groups through the use of percussion instruments while singing a familiar nursery rhyme; developing their performance and audience skills also.

The younger students have enjoyed 'brushing up' on their nursery rhymes and singing along with our pet dog, Bingo, who is very clever at keeping the beat using 'body percussion'. Our Bee Bee and Kangaroo Skippy Roo games have been fun and have been helping us to learn to sing in tune and to have a go singing on our own!

Bye for now, enjoy your holiday break and see you all next term on screen!!

Pip Ellis

## Celebrating their birthday

Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April

Hannah Thomas



We hope you have a fantastic day 😊





### WHAT'S COMING UP?

Mon 6<sup>th</sup> April  
Tues 28<sup>th</sup> April

School Holidays Begin  
School Resumes.

St Joseph's School  
PO Box 415  
12 Guppy Street,  
Pemberton WA, 6260.

P: 9776 1180  
E: [admin@stj.wa.edu.au](mailto:admin@stj.wa.edu.au)

Follow us on Facebook:  
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