



# St Paul's Post

At St Paul's we are Safe, Respectful, Learners

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Term 1, Week 8

20 March, 2020

## ***From the Principal***

Dear Parents and Carers,

My sincere thanks to you all for your support throughout this Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. As a community we have remained calm and taken specific and reasonable steps to limit the chances of either catching the virus or spreading it.

Our new line up procedures for before school, after recess and lunch times have supported the call for "social distancing" - a term that may have not been part of our vocabulary previously but one which has permeated our society at every level now.

In addition, we have staggered our recess and lunch breaks and made changes to our dismissal procedures. Whilst, these actions were optional for schools, the decision was made to support students with 1.5m social distancing as much as we physically could.

In an effort to support your child's learning at home, should you choose to keep them at home, or in the event that schools are closed, this week we provided a "Learning @ Home" journal to all students as well as provided opportunities for additional book borrowing from the library.

***The Learning Journal is a "just in case" option and, if you are keeping your child at home, you are welcome to use the tasks and ideas.***

Whilst we recognise that these activities cannot replace the support your child receives at school from our dedicated, professional staff, they form a continued and thoughtful approach to continue with learning as much as possible in these difficult times.

In this week's newsletter, Mrs Jackson, Mrs Ferguson, and Mrs Hooper our Leaders of Learning have also provided practical steps for helping your child with numeracy, reading and fostering curiosity and wonder in your child. Also, attached to this newsletter is a handout from Michael Grose, parenting educator and founder of Parenting Ideas. Michael offers some practical strategies for talking about Coronavirus with your child. I hope you find these useful.

Please continue to keep in your prayers all those affected by Coronavirus and other illnesses and join with me in praying that God's healing hands will provide them comfort and support in their time of need.

*Peace and Joy!*  
Mrs Megan Baird  
Principal

**Catholic Schools NSW has today announced that  
2020 NAPLAN has been CANCELLED**

## ***From the Assistant Principal***

Since the Coronavirus (COVID-19) was first reported, many countries have now reported cases of infection, affecting people of all ages from different nationalities. This epidemic is having an adverse effect on many aspects of our life -- everything from travel restrictions to shopping habits, even the closure of schools! And, it seems that as the situation grows worse the information we are getting is changing daily.

While the hysteria surrounding this outbreak is causing great anxiety and angst to people everywhere, especially parents, many of the changes that are occurring to our daily routines is causing worry and stress for our children. Many of their social connections such as sport, play dates, birthday parties and other extracurricular activities are being postponed and although children are considered to be in a lower risk category, this does not protect them from being exposed to news reports on television, radio or social media. As a parent it is important to reassure your child, dispel any myths or untruths, and help them feel informed, allowing them to focus more on positive messages. It is also important to keep up opportunities for them to feel connected with others or involved and important - just in new ways.

Parents need to involve children in planning and preparedness at home, assigning jobs and roles and teaching them ways to look after themselves. Having this sense of purpose and control can help alleviate their fears. However, despite your best efforts, some children may still present with anxiety issues. Knowing what to look for will help parents provide them with the support they need. The following short video has some advice and tips to help support parents through these challenging times.

[Corona Virus - A Guide for Parents](#)

Jane Misek  
Assistant Principal

## **Religion**

### **Pope Francis' Prayer to Mary during the coronavirus pandemic**

*O Mary,  
you always shine on our path  
as a sign of salvation and of hope.  
We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,  
who at the cross took part in Jesus' pain, keeping your faith firm.  
You, Salvation of the Roman People,  
know what we need,  
and we are sure you will provide  
so that, as in Cana of Galilee,  
we may return to joy and to feasting  
after this time of trial.  
Help us, Mother of Divine Love,  
to conform to the will of the Father  
and to do as we are told by Jesus,  
who has taken upon himself our sufferings  
and carried our sorrows  
to lead us, through the cross,  
to the joy of the resurrection. Amen.*



*Under your protection, we seek refuge, Holy Mother of God. Do not disdain the entreaties of we who are in trial, but deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin.*

### **Parish Masses and Reconciliation**

With the safety of our students, staff and parish community grades will not be attending Parish Mass or Reconciliation at this time. We will continue to pray in our learning spaces with the focus on God's love and showing compassion for others, especially during this time of Lent.

### **Project Compassion**

Our Project compassion donations have reached \$145.00 so far. Please continue to do extra jobs or give up buying the ice block at the canteen and donating your money to those less fortunate. Your generosity will work for the freedom of those living in poverty, challenge unjust structures, and empower people to work for a sustainable way of life.



## **Learning**

### **How to encourage your child to read at home**

Reading is an incredibly important part of your child's emotional and intellectual development. Strong reading skills set your children up for success later in life in many ways.

- Children will learn new words and improve both their language association skills and the fundamentals of language
- Reading increases your child's ability to learn across all subjects, not just in oral language and reading
- Hearing and reading stories helps children to master concepts of logic, judgement, and cause and effect relationships
- Reading helps to enhance the ability to concentrate and develop a longer attention span.

Instilling a love of reading can be crucial to language skills, independence, and emotional development.

Below is a list of things you can do at home to encourage your child to read at home:

1. Make time for reading. If your child has a jam-packed schedule and reading is shoved between gymnastics and band practice, reading may seem like an unwelcome chore. Allow reading to be a relaxing and enjoyable time, free from pressure.

2. Set aside a regular read-aloud time with your children. Reading aloud to your children is one of the best ways to promote future reading ability. Choose a variety of high-quality literature that appeals to your child's age and interests. Audio books are another great option for a reluctant reader. And don't abandon read-aloud time when your children get older—no one is too old for a great read-aloud.
3. Make sure the reading material isn't beyond your child's reading abilities. The interest may be there, but if the book is hard to read, your child's motivation will wane.
4. Create a cozy reading nook. A special reading space may be all the encouragement your child needs to settle down and spend time with a good book!
5. Look for a variety of reading material. Kids often gravitate toward the fiction shelves in the library, but don't stop there. There are many other genres to consider: joke books, cookbooks, how-to books, graphic novels, and biographies are all great non-fiction possibilities. And children's magazines can be a great out-of-the-box way to encourage a child to read.
6. Try buddy reading with your struggling reader. Buddy reading can help improve a child's fluency and make him feel more comfortable with reading on his own. Buddy reading is a great way to help your child gain fluency. In buddy reading, you and your child take turns reading by sentence, paragraph, or page. Also called *paired reading* or *partner reading*, buddy reading has multiple benefits, but perhaps the biggest benefit is that it prevents discouragement.
7. Have your reluctant reader read easy picture books to younger siblings. This provides excellent practice, yet it doesn't feel like work.
8. Let humor work its magic! Select a funny book at your child's reading level and read the first chapter aloud. Then stop reading. If your child wants to find out what happens next, he'll have to read it to him/herself!
9. Exhibit a love of reading. When your kids observe that you love to read, they're more likely to develop a love of reading themselves.
10. Provide access to books. Use your public library. Create a home library. Keep books accessible. When your child decides he wants to read, you want to be sure there's a book at his/her fingertips.



### **How Can I Help my Child Develop Mathematical Understandings?**

Mathematics is an integral and necessary part of everyday life. We use maths to do the shopping, cook a meal and to arrive at school on time. It is important for children to see the maths in real life and to develop the language related to mathematical ideas. You can support them in this. There are many opportunities at home that provide rich and meaningful maths contexts.

Some activities you can do at home to help your child to notice Mathematics and to develop mathematical understandings include:

#### **1. Use mathematical terms:**

- Please get the 'one litre' milk bottle from the fridge!
- Talk about different measurements used, such as teaspoons, millilitres, litres, and cups. Discuss ideas about empty and full.
- Describe your child's movements as they climb 'over' the fence, slide 'between' the poles, and swing 'under' the monkey bars.

#### **2. Sorting activities:**

- Use terms such as same and different. Use recycling as an opportunity to sort items to place in the rubbish. For example, paper, plastic, food waste and general waste.

#### **3. Estimating:**

- How many pegs do you think are in the basket?
- How many potatoes do you think we'll need to feed the family?
- How long do you think we were at the shops?

#### **4. Counting:**

- Count the pieces of fruit in the bowl, cutlery items on the table or how many steps it takes to walk from their bedroom to the kitchen.

#### **5. Playing cards:**

- Play matching number games like *Snap* or order the numbers on cards from smallest to largest.

#### **6. Play games:**

- Play *I Spy* or other games to help your child identify shapes, numbers and patterns.
- Board games - help your child when rolling dice to count, move, and stop after moving the number shown on the dice.



- Your child may count all the dots on the die face to determine the total number. Over time they will begin to recognise automatically the value on the die face without counting (subitising).

#### **7. Ask questions:**

- What shapes can you see?
- How can we find half?
- How can we share equally?
- I wonder how tall can you build a tower before it falls?
- I wonder how many \_\_\_\_\_ are in this bag?

**Mrs Kieran Jackson**  
**Leader of Learning**

### **5 Ways In Which You Can Foster Curiosity and Wonder In Your Child**

Children are naturally curious, they want to explore their environment. Learning occurs naturally when children can satisfy their curiosity through exploration. Tune into your child's curiosity and be aware of what attracts their attention. Note what entices your child to ponder and tilt their head in wonder. That curiosity is a natural path to learning.

Below are five ideas you can use to foster your child's curiosity and wonder:

- **Respectfully listen and respond to children's questions.**

Children ask a lot of questions: what, why, how come, when, who? Alert children come up with a million. Because questions are often so logical, we can be tempted to laugh; but it's best to refrain. Answer questions based simply on your child's ability to understand and their attention span.

- **When you're stumped by a question, say, "I don't know."**

Engage children's problem solving by asking them what they "guess" the answer could be. Together decide how to find the answer. When questions pop up, use a book or the Internet to find the answer.

- **Engage curiosity with simple, hands-on experiments.**

Experiments don't need to be elaborate. K-2 children can play with waterproof toys to determine which float and which sink. Kids then learn to compare and analyse information while having fun. Planting and watering a seed in a soil-filled cup to see what happens is another simple example. 3-6 children enjoy more complex experiments learned at school or from the Internet. With time, space and materials, children's curiosity finds plenty to explore.

- **Gradually introduce your child to the world beyond home.**

In a backyard or community setting, there is a lot to explore. A walk around your neighbourhood can be fascinating to children. Be prepared to stop often. The ground is close to their eye level, so bugs, fallen leaves, and animal tracks grab their attention regularly. Don't rush or you'll discourage curiosity and frustrate your young learner.

- **Provide children with basic discovery tools.**

A grocery bag for gathering nature treasures is handy. Kids also enjoy a safe, child-sized magnifying glass, magnet, digging shovel and bucket, bug catcher, balance scale, measuring tape, and other types of "investigation" toys.

**Mrs Julie Hooper**  
**Leader of Learning Inquiry/PBL**

### **General School Information** **Library News - Premier's Reading Challenge**

The Premier's Reading Challenge officially opened on Monday, 2 March 2020 and will run until Friday, 28 August. Participation in the challenge is optional but we would love as many students as possible to enter the challenge this year, it is such a great way of encouraging your children to read for enjoyment.



To experience a book a child can **listen** to the book, **participate** in a **shared reading** of the book or **read part or the entire book independently**.

All student Reading Records are submitted online by parents using their child/rens individual User ID and Password. If your child participated last year they use the same login and password as last year. Every class teacher has a copy of User ID's and Passwords in their classrooms in case you cannot remember them.



Kindergarten and other new students to the school this year will have received a separate note with their User ID and Password.

All students entering and successfully completing the Premiers Reading Challenge will receive an official PRC Certificate. To successfully complete the Challenge the student must have an online reading record entered and validated by Friday 31 August.

For further information about the Premier's Reading Challenge and to access the booklists please go to <https://online.det.nsw.edu.au/prc/home.html>

If you have any questions regarding the Premier's Reading challenge please see or email Mrs Taylor or Mrs Nobili [winstonthills@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:winstonthills@parra.catholic.edu.au)

## **General School Information**

### **COSHC**

At this stage COSHC will be offering vacation care during the Easter School Holidays. If you would like your child to attend this wonderful program, please ensure that you have completed the COSHC 2020 Enrolment Form and the Vacation Care Booking Form. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Brittany on 0429 017 382.

### **Bus Travel - Opal Cards**

Hillsbus have once again asked if you could remind your children to TAP on AND OFF when travelling to and from school. Also, students who have not been issued a card as yet from a recent application, will need to carry a copy of the approval notification issued by Opal until the card arrives.



### **Reminder: Emails to staff**

If you wish to contact your child's teacher, please continue to direct your emails to [winstonthills@parra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:winstonthills@parra.catholic.edu.au) which will then be triaged, as per usual practice. We appreciate your assistance and understanding. If you have any questions about the above or in the case of a genuine emergency please contact the school office during business hours on 8841 3800.

### **Work Health and Safety Reminders**

- **REMINDER** For those parents who utilise COSHC in the morning or afternoon, you are reminded that it is **essential** to ensure that the gate closes behind you every time. This measure is to ensure that students cannot access the carpark without an adult. Under no circumstances should you leave the gate slightly ajar or incompletely closed as this seriously jeopardises the safety of our students. Your cooperation in this matter is appreciated.
- Please be aware of the building works for our new Admin ramp - this has had a little impact in the carpark area and we ask that everyone in our community drives safely, holds their child's hand and walks in the carpark.
- Thank you for your understanding with regards to suspending parent helpers during the Coronavirus outbreak. We appreciate your support.

### **Staff Development Days for 2020**

Students will not attend school on the following dates and we ask that you make alternative arrangements. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

- Friday July 3
- Friday September 25
- Thursday December 17
- Friday December 18



***Happy Birthday to all those celebrating their birthdays in the next few weeks.....***

**Savanah N, Johanna D, Julian F, Jerome H, Oliver N, Jake Y, Peter E, Michael S, Isabella M, Madeleine C,**

**WINTER UNIFORM**  
Dear Parents  
Winter uniforms are available for purchase. Please make your purchase through the QKR app or you can come in to the uniform shop on Thursdays 2.30-4.00pm during the school term. Last day of trading is Thursday 9th April and we will re open on Thursday 30th April 2020 (2.30-4.00pm).

Please note:  
The uniform shop is not open during the school holidays.  
Stay safe and Kind regards

Elle  
Uniforms  
0421216414

## INSIGHTS

# Leading the way for children during the Coronavirus pandemic



If you're like me, the news of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has your head spinning and your heart pumping. That's only natural as life as we know has taken a seismic shift in recent days.

International travel bans, cancellation of sporting and cultural events, shopping frenzies and talk of school closures continue to dominate the airwaves. Terms such as social distancing, self-isolation and social lockdowns have entered our vocabularies and may soon become part of our daily lives.

Coronavirus is having an unprecedented impact on our daily lives, and will probably do so for some time. While keeping ourselves and children healthy and safe is our main concern, it's also essential to address the anxieties of children and young people during these changing times. Here are some ideas to help inform, reassure and keep children and young people safe.

### Build on what your children know

Children and young people have already been exposed to a great deal of information about corona virus through media, digital means and direct social contact. Their understanding will vary depending on their age and also the quality of their information sources so you probably will need to help kids process what they already know.

Casual conversations with teenagers and older children can be useful ways to glean their understanding. You could ask questions like "What are you hearing about Coronavirus? Is there anything you're not sure about?" Younger primary age children may need a more direct approach with parents addressing their specific concerns without giving too much information that can overwhelm them.

### Check your own thoughts and feelings

Check your own frame of mind and emotions about COVID-19 before talking to kids. Most children are astute mood detectives and they'll gauge their safety by the way you communicate with them. If you tell a child, "You've got to wash your hands or you'll get infected," you are communicating your own anxieties, making it difficult for them to maintain a healthy state of mind. Have a think about how you can frame your instructions and their importance in a way that doesn't heighten your child's anxieties.

### Stay informed

It's difficult to work out fact from fiction, correct from incorrect, information from exaggeration when the news is changing so fast. However you need to educate yourself about the virus itself, including how it's transmitted and how to stay safe. Get information from trustworthy sources such as The Australian Government Health Department website and the current federal government corona virus information media campaign.

# parenting \* ideas

## Answer questions truthfully

It's important that parents and teachers answer children's questions honestly in age-appropriate ways and within context of what is happening at the given time. If their sport or hobby has been temporarily cancelled empathise with their concerns, while helping them maintain a sense of perspective.

## Initiate positive action

One way to reduce anxiety and allay children's fears is to involve them in planning and preparation for their personal and group safety. Positive activities such as maintenance of personal hygiene, greeting people with an elbow tap and getting plenty of sleep can help restore a sense of control, that is so important for their wellbeing.

## Find refuge in rituals

Regular rituals such as mealtimes, bedtime stories and regular one-on-one time provide both an anchor to normality and a sense of connection for kids at times of change. Consider reconstituting favoured family rituals at this time if they have lapsed due to lack of time, or lifestyle frenzy.

## Look outwards

In difficult times there is a tendency to look inwards, which is a natural protective strategy. The alternative is to establish a sense of connection and community spirit by focusing on generosity and togetherness. Help children see past their own needs and look for ways to assist others whether it's shopping for an elderly neighbour, helping a younger sibling occupy themselves, or planning an indoor movie night for the whole family.

The Coronavirus presents many practical challenges to parents and other important adults in the lives of kids. Staying calm, keeping informed, and adjusting our own habits are just some of the challenges we face. However a significant challenge is one of personal leadership. That is, during these difficult times we need to be civil to each other, look out for each other and be mindful of the common good in everything we do. In this, we can all take a significant lead.



### Michael Grose

Michael Grose, founder of Parenting Ideas, is one of Australia's leading parenting educators. He's an award-winning speaker and the author of 12 books for parents including *Spoonfed Generation*, and the bestselling *Why First Borns Rule the World and Last Borns Want to Change It*. Michael is a former teacher with 15 years experience, and has 30 years experience in parenting education. He also holds a Master of Educational Studies from Monash University specialising in parenting education.



# Lent 2020

## CALENDAR

### Daily Lenten Activities for Families

#### MARCH

**SUN 22**

"But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God." Jn 3:21  
Thank someone today who has been the light of Christ for you.

**MON 23**

"You changed my mourning into dancing; O Lord, my God, forever will I give you thanks." Ps 30:12  
Send a card offering cheer and comfort to someone who is sad or lonely.

**TUE 24**

"Jesus said to him, 'Rise, take up your mat, and walk. Immediately the man became well, took up his mat, and walked.'" Jn 5:8-9  
Offer a family prayer for all of those who need healing. Look for ways to bring God's merciful love to others.

**WED 25**

"Mary said, 'Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.'" Lk 1:38  
Today is the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord. Offer a Hail Mary together and look to Mary as a model of faith.

**THU 26**

"Pray without ceasing." 1 Th 5:17  
Discuss as a family how you can follow Saint Paul's command. How will you keep Jesus in your minds and hearts each day of the Lenten season and always?

**FRI 27**

"The Lord is close to the brokenhearted." Ps 34:19  
Name some of the "brokenhearted" people in different parts of the world.  
Offer a prayer for their comfort and consolation.

**SAT 28**

"Yet I, like a trusting lamb led to slaughter, had not realized that they were hatching plots against me." Jer 11:19  
Visit your parish church and walk the Stations of the Cross together. Afterward, offer a prayer of thanksgiving to Jesus for offering his life for us.





# Lent 2020

## CALENDAR

### Daily Lenten Activities for Families

#### MARCH AND APRIL

**SUN 29**

"I will place my law within them and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people."  
Jer 31:33

Talk about ways in which God has blessed your family. How will you live as God's people this week?

**THU 2**

"Look to the Lord in his strength; seek to serve him constantly." Ps 105:4

What tests your strength as a family? Consider how you can you turn your anxieties over to God and serve him through your faith and trust.

**MON 30**

"Walk in all the ways that I command you, so that you may prosper." Jer 7:23

Make each step you take today one filled with love and consideration of others.

**FRI 3**

"And many there began to believe in him." Jn 10:42

Take out the intentions you wrote at the beginning of Lent and reread them. How has your faith in Jesus been strengthened during this holy season?

**TUE 31**

"So they said to him, 'Who are you?'" Jn 8:25

Who is Jesus in your life? Let this question be a conversation starter about the place of Jesus in your home and family.

**SAT 4**

"Stop making my Father's house a marketplace." Jn 2:16

Talk about ways you can show respect when you are in church.

**WED 1**

"The Lord is good to all and compassionate toward all his works." Ps 145:9

Practice compassion today by following the example of Jesus. Listen carefully to others and look for ways to share your love with them.

