



St Finbar's Primary School

Faith, Truth, Knowledge



Newsletter | Term 4 Week 8 | 5 December 2019



From The Principal

From the Principal

I love this time of year. My family spent last Sunday putting up the Christmas tree, adding decorations and lights, stringing fairy lights around the outside of the veranda, and hanging our stockings around the fireplace.



Each year I buy poinsettia plants (to replace the ones that I accidentally neglected for the rest of the year) and I plant them in two large pots on either side of the front door. My neighbours tell me that they know it's Advent when they see the poinsettias being carefully potted, and they have commented this year about how red the plants seem. I became curious about why poinsettias can be different shades.... From a bright green, through to a pale yellow, to the deepest of red. I discovered that every year, around this time, poinsettia growers are engaging in an elaborate regime aimed at making the plants turn red at just the right time. By following a precise sequence of exposure to light and dark they "force" the poinsettia's green leaves to turn red. The plants must be kept in direct sunlight during the day, then in total darkness for at least twelve hours a night for an entire month. Even a brief exposure to light during this period can disrupt the reddening process. It's a lot of work, but the results are breathtaking.

This made me think that this was a good analogy for Advent. For one whole month the Church asks us to alter our environment so that we can enter into a time of quiet waiting. It asks us to stand down from our everyday routines so that we can spend time in reflection and prayerful contemplation to prepare ourselves for the birth of Christ. By changing our environment, we are allowing ourselves a chance to bloom and grow. I hope that each of us are able to take some time, in the busyness of the season, to slow down and spend some time in preparation for the joy of the Christmas season.



Assessment and Reporting Period Semester Two 2019

Semester Two reports are being sent home on Friday 13th December (Week Nine). If you require an interview with your child's teacher please contact them via the school office (stfinbars@parra.catholic.edu.au or phone 4724 3600) so an appointment time for a face to face meeting can be arranged. Alternatively, a phone interview can be conducted at a time of mutual convenience.

Proposed Changes to Lunchtimes for 2020

At St Finbar's we have always had lunch breaks in the conventional manner - recess for thirty minutes at 11:00am and lunch for forty minutes at 1:30pm. However, for 2020, we are going to trial a new system, and we are confident that doing so will enable us to address some issues that have been concerning us. The new routine will consist of switching recess and lunch on the timetable, and allowing the children to play first before eating.



Firstly, for some children, breakfast is a meal eaten quite early on in the day. Even though we have a designated crunch and sip period built into class timetables, we had some concerns over the length of time elapsing between breakfast and the next main meal of the day - approximately four to five hours. By switching lunch time to 11:00am we can ensure that children are eating to re-fuel, not for snacking purposes. When children snack, and then participate in vigorous play, the energy acquired is quickly burned off during vigorous play. This has an impact on the learning in the classroom, as hungry children cannot concentrate as well.

Another benefit of moving the lunch time break forward to 11:00am is to ensure that food remains fresh and appetizing for the students and not spoil due in the hot weather we are experiencing and will continue to experience during the warmer months. While we endeavour to keep food as cool as possible, eating earlier will lessen the risk of food becoming less appetizing.



We are also proposing that the students wait until after play to eat at these scheduled break times. The reason behind this is that often our students are keen to play and leave food behind, untouched and left to be taken home. Eating after play would eliminate hungry students re entering the classrooms, unable to concentrate due to hunger. We are hoping that the increase of good food intake will increase, resulting in less waste.



We propose that the break schedule be altered to resemble this:

Crunch and Sip break around 9:30/10:00am

Break One: Lunch Play at 11:00, followed by a ten minute eating time from 11:30 - 11:40am

Break Two: Afternoon Play at 1:30 followed by a ten minute eating time from 2:00 - 2:10pm

Other schools have tried this and have experienced great results in terms of less food being wasted and noticeably higher levels of energy in the classroom. There was found to be significantly reduced rubbish issues on the playground. The children were ready to learn as soon as they enter the classroom. The occurrence of children eating their lunch as soon as they arrived at school decreased. Data showed a significant number of reduced behavioural issues, at a school level.

We anticipate that this will not have a significant impact on ice block days or special food days. Ice blocks will still be handed out at Break two. [My School Lunch Box](#) have agreed to these changes and all services will continue as normal. Children will receive their ordered meal at Break one.

End of Year PBS4L Reward

As a reward for reaching the grand total of 3,500 tokens handed out in 2019 we will be having a special reward day on Friday 13th December. Students can wear House Colour Mufti (t shirts with sleeves, hats and closed-in shoes are compulsory) and in the last session of the day the children will be treated with a movie and a vanilla ice cream cone. We will ensure that we make arrangements for our dairy free/gluten free students by providing them with a lemonade icy pole. Please note that all movies will be rated G.

Changes to Staffing 2020

It is with much sadness that we farewell three of our staff members who have made significant contributions to the St Finbar's community in the past. Mr Chris Komorowski has taught music at St Finbar's for the past four years. He has accepted a position at St Luke's teaching music for 2020. We thank Mr K for bringing the joy of music to St Finbar's. Mr Quinn Tucker has worked as an IT trainee for the past two years. He has accepted a supervisory role with CEDP for 2020. We thank Mr Tucker Jr for his tireless efforts in keeping our technology up to date and in tip top working order. Finally, we acknowledge Mr Chris Scanlan who has worked in Stage Two each Friday in 2019. Mr Scanlan's gentle and encouraging manner with the students in Stage Two has been appreciated, and we wish Mr Scanlan all the best for his future teaching career. *May God bless you all and keep you safe in the palm of his hand. Amen*



Kindergarten Transition Program

This past few weeks we have welcomed many of our Kindergarten 2020 students to St Finbar's to experience Learning Through Play sessions. This opportunity was offered to all Kindergarten 2020 students, with many parents opting to take several time slots, so as to ensure a smooth transition between pre- school and school. These visiting children have been made to feel that they are already a part of the St Finbar's community and have been enjoying their play sessions enormously.

Thank you to the Kindergarten staff who have accommodated the extra children, and who are working hard to ensure that all children feel comfortable and positive about coming to school next year.

May Christ's peace be with you,

Mrs Robyn Clarke
Principal



Teachers as Learners



Name	Date	Professional Learning
Donna Beukers	26th November	Faces Rollover course
Leanne Brown Robyn Clarke	28-29th November	PBL Lead Learner course
Robyn Clarke	3rd December	System Leaders Breakfast meeting
Ben Ticehust	5th December	Assistant Principal's Network meeting
Robyn Clarke	6th December	Principal's association Mass



Skoolbag Notes to Follow Up

Notes recently sent home via Skoolbag and Students:

- Library Overdue Notices - DUE ASAP
- Swimming Carnival - eForm sent out via Skoolbag



Next Friday, you will receive your child's Semester 2 Learning Report. This report contains information about your child's achievement, effort and application and their behaviour under our framework of being a safe, respectful learner.

In addition to the school report, parents of students in Years 2 - 6 will also receive a copy of their child's ACER Reading and Numeracy Assessments. These assessments take place in all schools in our diocese, to help leaders, teachers and students track growth and performance using a national norm referenced test.

As these reports are quite different to our school reports, I wanted to have an opportunity to explain to you how to read these reports and provide parents and students with an opportunity to transform this information into knowledge and ultimately into constructive action.

You can access a youtube clip [here](#) of me explaining how to read the PAT Reading and PAT Maths Reports. You can also find out more information about the ACER PAT Tests [here](#).

Let your light shine

Ben Ticehurst
Assistant Principal



Last Day for all Students
is
Wednesday 18 December



Christmas Concert

Next Monday, 9th December is our Christmas Performance. Please click on this [link](#) for all the details. Please ensure your children arrive on time and meet their teacher in the Parish Hall.

We look forward to celebrating this special time of year with all our families.

Santa Hat Day

This year for our St Vincent De Paul Christmas Appeal, we are having a fun Santa Hat Day!

Students are able to wear a santa hat, reindeer antlers and elf hats to school.

We ask that students bring in a non perishable item to add to our Christmas hampers. Each grade has been allocated suggested items so we can make up the Christmas hampers, full of goodies which will help make this joyful season brighter for those in need.

[Click here](#) to view the note for more details. This note will also be sent home via Skoolbag.

St Finbar's Parish Christmas Eve Vigil

Last year, many families from our school came together at our parish Christmas Eve Vigil to celebrate the joyous birth of Jesus. Students dressed as figures representative of the scene of the nativity, including angels, shepherds, Mary, Joseph and the three wise men.

We invite our students and families to do the same this Christmas Eve. Students are asked to arrive in dress and meet Mrs Brown at the back of the church. Here, they will each be given a candle that they will place by the crib in the church's nativity scene, after communion. Please extend the invitation to cousins, friends and neighbours, as we join together in celebrating the spirit, meaning and miracle of Christmas.





Christmas Eve Vigil commences at 6pm.

Dates for your diary



- **St Finbar's Christmas Concert** Monday 9th December 6.00pm
- **Year 6 Graduation & End of Year Mass** Monday 16th December 9.15am
- **St Finbar's Parish Christmas Eve Vigil** Tuesday 24th December 6pm (Children to come dressed up as figures representative of the scene of the nativity)

Yours in faith,

Leanne Brown

Religious Education Coordinator

Kinder Excursion - Calmsley Hill Farm

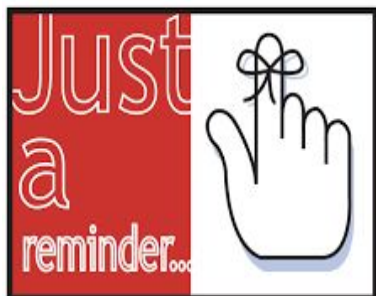
On Thursday 28th November, Kindergarten attended an excursion to Calmsley City Hill Farm. As we boarded the bus the students were filled with excited chatter about what the day would bring.

The day included a tour of the farm animals, a session watching working dogs round up sheep, a viewing of traditional sheep shearing and a turn milking a cow. The favourite activity was however, the tractor ride around the farm where the students excitedly embraced the bumpy experience.





Important Reminders



- **Check your Skoolbag App.** If you are having trouble with it, try refreshing the app by uninstalling and re-installing. Check your notification settings in the app and on your phone. You will find we are sending more information home via Skoolbag rather than paper notes. It is important that your Skoolbag app is working efficiently so that you don't miss any key information.

- **Remember** to check your child has a hat and a water bottle each day. If your child is allergic to sunscreen please let us know.

- Please check your child's belongings when they come home each day to ensure they have not picked up a hat or jacket that does not belong to them. We have a situation at present where families are losing brand new hats and jackets that have been clearly labelled.

Dates To Remember

Friday 6 December

Year 6 Tree Tops Adventure
Day Out

Friday 13 December

Semester 2 Reports Distributed

Wednesday 18 December

Last day of School for 2019

Monday 9 December

Christmas Concert
6pm

Monday 16 December

End of Year Mass
9:15am

Year 6 Graduation Dinner
6pm

Thursday 12 December

2020 Class Promotion Afternoon

Tuesday 17 December

School Swimming Carnival



[View School Calendar](#)



School Office and Parish News

From The Office

Reminder: When returning permission notes for an event, please send money in with the note if applicable.

Reminder: Check your child's jackets, jumpers, hats to ensure they are labelled and that they have their own belongings, not someone else's.

Parish News

[Click this link to read The Parish Barra](#)

Sunday Masses:

Vigil - 5.30pm Saturday evening
7.30am & 9.30am Sunday morning
6pm Family/Youth - First and Third Sunday evenings (except Jan)

Weekday Masses:

Monday: 9am **Tuesday:** 9am **Wednesday:** 8am
Thursday: 9am (except third Thursday - see Anointing Mass)
Friday: 9am
Saturday: 9am

Reconciliation: Saturday evening - 4.45 - 5.15pm, or any time on request

Rosary in Honour of Our Lady: Usually after Wednesday morning Mass.

Anointing Mass: Usually third Thursday of the month at 10am (except January)

Adoration & Benediction: Usually after Friday morning Mass.



Years 3 - 6 Start on Thursday 30 January

Kinder - Year 2 Start on Friday 31 January