



"Blackboard" GCS Newsletter

Term 2 Week 8

What's happening in term 2?

June

- 10 - Working Bee
- 16 - Last Day of Term

July

- 10 - Term 3 Commences

Small Class Sizes & New Enrolments

Most of our classes currently have around 15 students. This is excellent for teachers to provide individual support for each child in their classes. However, for school growth and budgeting, class sizes of around 20 will be a healthier number for our school at this time. Projected numbers for 2018 are looking positive, but new enrolments for semester 2 would be great.

If you know of any families who are looking for a Christian education for their children, and may be feeling like their children are just small fish in a very big pond, I encourage you to make a recommendation for them to consider GCS for their child's primary education.

I often talk about our school to other educators, and when I mention the size of our school, people from other schools are envious of the culture and community of small schools. One Principal from a large school recently remarked to me that I must know every student's name! I was pleased to say that I do.

Last year, I offered a family referral discount for any family who recommends a new student, which eventuates in a confirmed enrolment. There were a few families who benefited from this offer in 2016. I would like to extend this offer for any new enrolments for the start of semester 2. When a new family attends an enrolment interview, I will ask them if they know families currently in the school who have recommended them. If they nominate your name, the discount will be applied to your family school fee invoice.

Word of Mouth is always the best marketing strategy. Please pray for new families to join our school community.



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Lunchtime Activities

Students have been enjoying some extra activities at lunch playtime in the last few weeks. These have included playing sport on the new grass field, exploring the outdoor learning area and board games in the library.



Punctuality in the mornings

There are times when unexpected things happen that can make us late. I know there have been times when I have been caught by a train on a crossing and think, “this train is going to make me late!” Really, truth be told, I was **cutting it fine** by leaving with **just enough time** to get to my destination **just in time**.

Now that the cold weather has really kicked in, please try to make sure that your children are at school on time, ready to start the learning day positively. Walking into class late can make a child feel very awkward when everyone else is settled in to the first lesson.



School Holidays and Professional Training

The end of term is coming up quickly. During the mid-year break, students have a 3-week holiday break. The last week on student holidays is the staff professional training week. Chris Parker from Christian Education National will be leading our staff through a 1 day course focused on teaching Christianly.

Certificate of Christian Education (Deliver) - Christian pedagogy

This 1 day (or equivalent) workshop session is for the school wanting to dedicate a whole day of staff training in pedagogy that is distinctly Christian and shaped at all points by the gospel and a biblical worldview of the teacher, the child, and learning. Teaching Christianly will include pedagogy that is biblically informed and shaped. The methods and techniques we use to teach our students in Christian schools will be drawing them towards or away from the gospel. This workshop will explore the issues that need to be considered in the unique context of your Christian school when delivering a Christian pedagogy.

National Institute of Christian Education website: <http://www.nice.edu.au>

This will be the third one day certificate course that Chris has led our staff through over the last year. I look forward to learning more from Chris during the PD week. The following text is a direct quote from one of Chris Parker's articles in the CEN Nurture journal.



Discernment and transformation

If everything that we do sits within a cultural story that may be at odds with the gospel-shaped story of the world and that the cultural story has shaping effects on our view of life and others, then surely Christian parents and educators must be discerning about these shaping influences. Games and toys sit within a cultural setting and are not immune from having a shaping influence – particularly when we put the emotional connection of competition into the equation. However, is the right response to conclude things like, “It is wrong for Christians to play Monopoly” or, “Children of Christian parents should never play with Barbie”? Absolutely not! This would be a legalistic response and we have been freed in Christ from this sort of law keeping.

Discernment is crucial as Christian parents. We must first realise that all activities are worldview-shaping and that the ‘real world’ that our games and toys might model is not necessarily God’s design for the world; the ‘real world’ might actually be a distorted world and a good deal removed from the ‘good life’ that God designed for us. When we have grasped this, we can then ask questions about age or stage appropriateness and we might even choose to deliberately engage with the activities with our children so that we can use it as an opportunity to discuss the importance of not being conformed to the patterns of this world and an opportunity to be transforming them by the renewing of their minds.

Parker, C. (2012). Toy guns, Barbie and Monopoly: Are these games educational? *Nurture: Journal for Home & School*, 46 (3), 8-10.