

## FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear members of the Lisieux community,

Although we are only mid-way through the 2019 school year, it may interest you to know that planning for the 2020 school year is already underway. Making decisions about staffing, grade configurations, resources and so on is a complex area of management, and in most cases, there are significant considerations which stakeholders may be unaware of. For example, parents often comment on their desire to have small class sizes – in actual fact, research clearly shows that despite popularity with parents, class size has little if any impact on student learning outcomes. Overwhelmingly, the number one determinant of student learning success is to have effective teachers. This outweighs every other factor in student achievement.

There are also pros and cons for having composite, multi-age or single level classes. A key factor in making such a decision can be uneven enrolment numbers; additionally, mixing children of different ages and levels can be educationally and socially advantageous too.

My point is that there are many factors to consider. If we, as the leadership team of our learning community, decide that having 3 smaller Prep classes is going to suit our needs better than having two larger classes, for example, we need to understand that this comes at an overall financial impost. There may be other resources that we need to forego in order to do this.

In the long-term, our goal is to have a double stream school (2 x each class), however, in our early growth stage, this may not be achievable. For 2020, we are carefully considering the benefits vs challenges of combining our Year 1 and 2 / Year 3 and 4 classes to find a model that will allow us the greatest flexibility and most evenly sized classes. In all cases, we balance the priorities to reach such decisions. Discussion will also take place at our next Advisory Council meeting, before a final decision is made, at which point outcomes will be communicated to parents.

In working towards our 2020 vision, we have advertised this week for more teaching staff. We are very fortunate that the passion, energy and commitment of our current team works hard to plan and deliver best practice teaching and learning outcomes, and families can be assured that we will endeavour to continue the search for educators who share these qualities and support our vision.

In relation to our Stage 2 works, I will have more information for families about our architect appointment for this work over the coming weeks. Interviews were conducted late last term with three prospective firms and the interview panel was unanimous in their recommendation. With works expected to commence early 2020, we have applied for two demountable portable classrooms to assist us in accommodating students next year. We have not yet decided which classes these facilities will cater for.

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## SCHOOL CALENDAR

### JULY

Thur 25<sup>th</sup> Year 5/6 Leadership Refresher Day (Including excursion to The Rock)

Fri 26<sup>th</sup> Assembly led by Prep Red 2:30pm All Welcome

Tues 30<sup>th</sup> Year 5/6 Bike Education

Wed 31<sup>st</sup> Year 5/6 Bike Education

### AUGUST

Thur 1<sup>st</sup> Year 5/6 Bike Education

Fri 2<sup>nd</sup> Whole School French Morning 9:00am – 10:30am

Sat 3<sup>rd</sup> **Lisieux School Ball RACV - Torquay Major School Event and Fundraiser**

Sun 4<sup>th</sup> Year 3/4 Family Mass 8:45am St Therese Church

Fri 16<sup>th</sup> **Staff Professional Learning Day – First Aid Training Student Free Day**



## FROM THE PRINCIPAL

At all times, I will endeavour to be transparent about the decisions we are making and the reasons behind them. I thank parents for your ongoing support as we grow as a learning community. Please know that you are always welcome to chat to me directly about any concerns you have. I value greatly that parents and staff do this rather than having non-productive chat that can sometimes lead to misinformation.

God's blessings for the week ahead,

Susan Ryan

Principal

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## PRAYER

God of all that grows in the earth as well as in our lives and hearts, help us to value the place where we've been planted and to look after ourselves and those around us.

Lord of life, help us to bloom.



## WELLBEING

### Why Creating More Kindness and Compassion Matters

Published on July 18, 2019 in [Better Relationships](#)

One day when I was eight, I went on a trip to a funfair with one of my best friends and her parents. We had such a great day. But when it came to the large merry-go-round my friend didn't want to go on the ride, so I clambered up on my own to sit astride a gaily painted horse and watched the world go round.

When the ride came to a stop, I scrambled back down to the ground and quickly realised I couldn't find my friend or her parents. Wandering around like a lost sheep, with tears streaming down my face, a lady came up to me and asked if I was alright and where were my parents? She took me to the "Lost Kids" tent where another lady gave me a drink, a sweet biscuit and a comic to read. Shortly after my friend and her parents turned up, highly embarrassed because they thought they had had time to duck off to the shooting range while I was on the ride, but when they returned, I had gone.

A happy ending, but it was the kindness of strangers that made the biggest impact on me that day.

#### **Kindness.**

It's that time a friend buys you a concert ticket for your favourite band that you go to watch together, or when as a junior doctor your boss offers you the opportunity for the magical experience of delivering twins (under his watchful eye), or when a colleague notices you're not yourself and brings you coffee and a hug.

These moments of kindness are what leave an indelible impression, a memory of awe, joy or relief.

They bind us more closely as humans. We feel more compassion, empathy, pride and connection.

## The science of kindness

What makes us kind?

It turns out kindness has a physiological basis.

The vagal nerve is the longest of our cranial nerves that wanders from the brain stem to the muscles of our neck enabling us to nod our head, orient our gaze and vocalise. Moving south it helps to regulate our breathing and heart rate, and acts as a [modulator](#) between the brain and the gut so we can adapt to stressors in our environment. It's known to influence the immune system and regulate the level of inflammation in the body.

Research by [Dacher Keltner](#) author of the Power Paradox and Born to be Good has revealed how it is the strength of our vagal tone that determines empathy and compassion.

A higher vagal tone calms the mind and promotes more positive and prosocial emotion via the impact on our oxytocin levels. This leads to what Keltner surmises to serve our greatest need; to connect, survive and thrive.

Meaning -**we are hardwired to connect and care.**

### Choosing to care

The one thing that makes it harder for us to have [compassion for others](#) (unless you are a sociopath) is when you are experiencing severe chronic stress, as time pressure, work overload or worries.

In this state of mind, you're operating in survival mode. It's not that you're a horrible person (well, at least I hope you're not) but when you're under relentless pressure your bandwidth for caring becomes increasingly narrowed.

### It's time to stop always being in a rush.

Back in 1973 in a [social psychology study](#) a group of 67 seminary students were asked to prepare a sermon on the parable of the Good Samaritan. They were randomly assigned (unbeknownst to them) to be in a "hurried" state, an "intermediate hurried" state or "non-hurried" state.

The "hurried" group were advised that they were already late to deliver their sermon in another building, so they had better hurry up. The intermediate group were told that "they are ready for you now, please make your way to the building". The control group were advised that there were a few minutes leeway, but they might as well go across now.

Each student walked alone to their destination and on the way came across a man (a confederate to the study) slumped in a doorway with his eyes closed and clearly distressed.

### Who would stop to help?

Interestingly in the "hurried" group only 10% did, whereas 47% of the "intermediate" group and 63% of the unhurried group stopped to assist.

### How does this play out at work?

If you're always under time pressure, the need to achieve your goals becomes the prime target. When there is less pressure it's easier to spread your focus of attention to other things.

Managing your cognitive load means taking back control of how you allocate your time and mental energy because if you're rushing around putting out spot-fires you are no longer present to what's going on and as a consequence won't always be making the best decisions.

What this study showed is how caring and compassion is more than just a personality trait, the other major variable being the amount of time pressure or stress a person is experiencing.

Caring matters. Because when you feel cared for and you care about other people, everything feels better. Relationships are strengthened, we are more trusting, more generous and we'll take the time to stop and help someone in trouble. Which is why creating a workplace environment founded on care creates a massive opportunity for increased contribution, collaboration and working well together.

### Cultivating compassion and care

It's often the simplest of actions that have the greatest impact.

1. Smile more
2. Slow your breathing rate. Exhaling slowly using deep diaphragmatic breathing for one to three complete breaths is instantly calming.
3. Practice mindful breathing as a yoga practice or formal mindfulness meditation
4. Engage in healthy self-care habits with good nutrition (plant based, fresh and unprocessed) regular exercise and increased physical activity across the day, getting enough sleep, and keeping a gratitude journal
5. Spend more time outside. 120 minutes in the great outdoors is the minimum recommended for good mental health and wellbeing
6. Seek out opportunities to practice random acts of kindness
7. Keep things real by regularly switching off from your social media

What are you doing to slow down to notice more and share greater kindness?





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