Dear Parents,

**Wonderful beginnings in Junior Primary 2017**
Sharp new pencils, brightly coloured contact, shiny new shoes and enthusiastic smiles…… it is the beginning of another year of learning in Junior Primary. This year we are very excited to welcome nine new families into our Junior Primary community. Please make all of our new families welcome as they join the MECS Junior Primary community. We are also thrilled to welcome Mrs Rachel Harrison and Mrs Ange Smit to the Junior Primary teaching team. We are blessed to have both of these talented and experienced teachers joining our JP team.

**The Junior Primary Team for 2017 is:**
- Bandicoots: Miss Fiona Murray.
- Wallabies: Miss Vivian Theunissen.
- Echidnas: Mrs Kaye Smith (JP Cluster Leader).
- Frilled Necked Lizards: Mrs Rachel Harrison.
- Numeracy Workshop: Mrs Ange Smit.

Secondly, we would like to congratulate and thank all of our families for the wonderful beginning we have had to our new MECS National Park. Many of our JP students are very proud of their new rubbish free lunch boxes and they are all doing a brilliant job of taking any wrappers from their lunches home in their lunch box. This has greatly reduced the amount of waste that we produce as a Junior Primary community and helped us to keep our beautiful facilities tidy.

Thirdly, we begin a wonderful new year of learning. The JP team is very excited about our Core Studies unit *Uniquely Created*. This is a fantastic way to begin our year together as we learn about and celebrate the gifts, talents, skills, and uniqueness of each of our students. We will be exploring how we are made in the image of God and as His image bearers we are each planned and created to be special and unique. We will also be looking at the ways God has made us all different and how this diversity allows us to work together as a community. The Junior Primary Students will be learning about how they are unique and also appreciating the uniqueness of their peers. To celebrate and share our learning we will be having a JP Afternoon Gallery on Friday March 17th from 2:30pm for families to come into the classroom and share in our wonderful discoveries.

**Ditto’s Keep Safe Adventure**
As part of our *Uniquely Created* Core Studies unit, we will be completing our personal safety unit as part of our Child Safe School Accreditation. We use a program that has been developed by the Bravehearts organisation called Ditto’s Keep Safe Adventure. The program teaches children about personal safety in the community in a fun and non-confronting way. The learning materials for the program will be available at our Parent Information Session. Please use the following link to the Bravehearts Parent Guide if you would like some more information on the program [https://bravehearts.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Ditto-Show-Parents-Guide.pdf](https://bravehearts.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Ditto-Show-Parents-Guide.pdf)
Some Important Dates for your Diary

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| Thursday February 16, 1:45pm | **JP Information Afternoon**  
Venue: PUMP Room  
1:45 for a cuppa. 2pm Information session commences. |
| Friday February 17    | **Whole School Assembly**  
Our first whole school assembly for the year will be on **Friday, February 17** at **10am**. Parents are welcome to have a cuppa from 9am in the main staffroom after drop off. |
| Thursday March 9      | **Grandparents and Special Friend’s Day**                               |
| Monday March 13       | **Labour Day Holiday** (school closed)                                   |
| Thursday March 16     | **JP Connect Morning Tea** (8:45 in the main staffroom)                 |
| Friday March 17       | **JP Gallery Afternoon** (14:30 onwards)                                |
| Monday March 27       | **Parent-Teacher Interviews**                                           |
| Thursday March 30     | **School Photos (not Friday March 17)**                                 |
| Tuesday March 28      | **Last Day of Term 1 (3.15pm dismissal)**                               |

**JP Parent Information Afternoon - Thursday February 16 at 2pm**

Junior Primary Families are warmly invited to come along to an Information Session in the PUMP room to hear about the JP program for 2017. This is a valuable time to learn more about the JP program, ask questions and get to know other JP parents and the JP teachers. Please come at 1:45pm for a cuppa and a chance to chat. The information session will commence at 2pm. For those who are unable to attend, relevant information will also be sent home.

**Parent Helpers**

We are thankful for Parent Helpers in the classroom, and on excursions and camps. This year, as part of our accreditation as a Child Safe School, all Parent Helpers for the classroom, excursions and camps will need to participate in a Child Safe briefing session. This will be presented as part of our JP Information Afternoon. Parents who would like to assist in the classroom can then take away the Child Safety Policy booklet, read it and return the Acknowledgement Slip to the office. All Parent Helpers must also have a current Working With Children Check (WWCC) registered with the School Office before committing to becoming a Parent Helper.

Areas that you may like to assist on a weekly basis in the classroom include:

- Numeracy Workshops (Tuesday and Wednesday 11:30am-1pm)
- 3pm Regular Readers (Listening to an individual student read from 3-3:15pm)
- Art (Friday 1:45-3:15pm)

We look forward to a wonderful term of learning with our amazing JP students. Please see your child’s teacher if you have any queries, questions or concerns.

Blessings,

Kaye Smith, Vivian Theunissen, Fiona Murray

*Junior Primary Teachers 2017*