



#### This week's stories from the media

- P plates for teachers
- School speeds confusing dangerous
- Students thrive in stricter schools
- Classroom behaviour key to education success
- Kiwis push for phonics
- End to TAFE monopoly
- What to expect from preschool

#### School Speeds Confusing Dangerous

**Pedestrian Council labels South Australian school speed limits the most confusing and dangerous in the country.**

South Australia's school-zone speed laws have been labelled dangerous, the worst in the nation and "road safety with fingers crossed".

The head of the Pedestrian Council of Australia, which is calling for nationally standardised school-zone road rules, says "all of Australia should be worried about South Australia."

"It's utterly ridiculous and potentially lethal that a motorist can drive at the default speed limit in a school zone if he or she can't see any children. Most crashes occur when drivers don't see children before it's too late," said Harold Scruby. "It's road safety with fingers crossed."

On national Walk Safely to School Day today, the council says the wide differences between school speed zones from state to state are absurd "and potentially lethal".

[Read the story](#)

#### P Plates For Teachers

**SA principals urge radical rethink of industrial relations to improve teacher quality.**

Keeping new teachers on probation until they prove they're up to the job, extra end-of-year training for underperformers and putting students on recruitment panels are among ideas raised by principals for radical industrial relations changes to improve teacher quality.

A position paper from the Secondary Principals' Association also calls for more teaching vacancies to be advertised openly.

The aim of that is to encourage movement of teachers and enable schools to rejuvenate their workforces.

The paper outlines three major "blocks" in the way of raising standards - teacher supply, development and movement.

It says most starting teachers are "poorly prepared" for the job yet "often enter as permanent employees before demonstrating proficiency".

Some principals are faced with "large numbers" of "mediocre" teachers, who pose a bigger development challenge than the worst underperformers, who can be placed under formal performance management.

The situation is worsened by permanent teachers being able to stay in the same school for their whole careers.

Australian Education Union state president Howard Spreadbury said rather than probation, new teachers needed more mentoring, which meant resourcing schools to give leaders and teachers more time for "feedback on their practice".

[More](#)



**“...most starting teachers are “poorly prepared” for the job....”**

### Students Thrive In Stricter Schools

**Schools that actively intervene to stamp out classroom misbehaviour can help boost students' academic performance by several months, according to a new toolkit designed to guide teachers to use evidence-based practices.**

When handled effectively, behaviour management programs can boost a classroom's academic progress by at least three months, which is described in the toolkit as a “moderate impact” intervention.

An emerging body of evidence around the links between classroom discipline, student behaviour and academic outcomes comes at a critical time for education officials in Australia given federal government plans to spend an extra \$24.5 billion over the next 10 years to arrest declining academic standards.

About one-third of students in advantaged schools, and about half of those in disadvantaged schools, reported that in most or every class there was noise and disorder, students didn't listen, and that learning was difficult.

[More](#)

### Classroom Behaviour Key To Education Success

**Student behaviour at school is a better predictor of educational and career success than IQ, socio-economic background or personality, according to a US study that could have serious implications for Australia's bid to arrest declining academic standards.**

The first longitudinal study examining the relationship between adolescent behaviours and life outcomes has revealed that those who show higher levels of interest in school and higher levels of responsibility go on to have more prestigious, high-paying jobs.

The research has turned the spotlight on the “problematic” state of Australia's classrooms as highlighted in the latest PISA survey, in which Australia ranked 63rd out of 68 countries for classroom discipline.

Relying on data from a 1960 student survey, after which participants were followed up four times over 50 years, they found that having higher interest in school was related to higher educational attainment and higher occupational prestige and income.

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### Kiwis Push For Phonics

**Teachers in New Zealand are defying longstanding education policy on literacy and using phonics programs to teach children how to read, with a vast majority of converts reporting more confident and capable readers as a -result.**

Researchers found that 90% of more than 660 primary school teachers reported employing phonics-style methods in their literacy instruction.

And of the teachers surveyed, 84% reported considerable benefits, such as improved reading ability, increased confidence in reading and writing, and a boost to literacy achievement across the classroom as a whole.

[Full Story](#)

### End To TAFE Monopoly

**Private training providers will be able to offer almost 250 courses previously confined to just TAFE under a State Government plan to unlock the vocational education market.**

The bolstered list of courses will open up 1700 training places in non-government providers, a key milestone for a Government aiming to break up TAFE's monopoly of the sector.

“This represents a 21% increase in the courses open to contestability, covering defence, agriculture, health, construction and ICT.”

The Government has long hit out at changes that saw TAFE's competitors funding shrink....

[Read the story](#)

### What To Expect From Preschool

**Parents often have different expectations for their three to five-year-old children when they attend an early learning centre.**

Research demonstrates children's learning achievements are greater from play-based programs, which include activities such as block building, compared to early childhood programs that have an academic focus.

The early childhood education curriculum emphasises the importance of play-based learning and research demonstrates children's learning achievements are greater from play-based programs compared to early childhood programs that have an academic focus.

[Read more](#)