



This week's stories from the media

- Education ministers support \$190m funding
- Childcare workers could be banned from using personal phones
- PISA testing results
- Survey says chaplains should be hired based on qualification
- Old tradies as teachers
- High ATAR leads to high earning

Childcare Worker Phone Ban

Childcare workers could be banned from using personal phones and iPads at centres following a nationwide review into child safety.

The review was handed to the country's education ministers today, who will make a formal decision on whether to act on the recommendation, already in place in many childcare centres.

Federal Education Minister Jason Clare and Early Childhood Minister Anne Aly tasked the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) with reviewing child safety arrangements in childcare settings earlier this year.

It came after Mr Clare was confidentially briefed by Federal Police about allegations a former Gold Coast childcare worker, abused 91 girls in Brisbane, Sydney and overseas childcare centres.

The review also examined the working with children check process, mandatory reporting, and the effectiveness of record keeping and information-sharing between states and territories.

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Education Ministers Support \$190m Funding

SA's public schools are set to receive a major funding boost following a meeting of the nation's education ministers.

State ministers together with their federal counterpart Jason Clare, endorsed bringing all schools to 100% of the Schooling Resource Standard at Monday's meeting in Sydney.

The move would equate to about an extra \$190m for SA public schools.

The federal government is set to fund the five per cent shortfall in the next Gonski Agreement.

SA Education Minister Blair Boyer said securing the funding was "critical".

At the meeting, the ministers identified a series of priority reforms which will be achieved by setting goals in the areas of "equity and excellence, wellbeing and workforce" in the next agreement.

Currently, the standard's funding equates to \$13,060 for primary students and \$16,413 for secondary students.

Speaking after the meeting, Education Minister Jason Clare said Australia's funding and education gaps needed to be fixed, but did not say who would meet funding shortfalls.

"At the moment, most public schools aren't fully funded and children from poor families and regional Australia are three times more likely to fall behind at school," Mr Clare said.

"We've got a good education system, but it can a lot better and a lot fairer."

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“...The move would equate to about an extra \$190m for SA public schools....”

PISA Testing Results

The latest global testing of 15-year-olds in maths, science and reading reveals academic atrophy from a witches' brew of disruption, dysfunction and distraction that has dumbed down a generation.

Today's zoomers - digital natives - are nearly two years behind millennials who took similar tests in 2000.

In reading, zoomers are 18 months behind millennials. In science, they lag a year behind millennials.

“Half of all 15-year-olds are not performing at the level they should be at,” according to ACER chief executive Geoff Masters.

“These are things most kids are expected to learn in primary school. Goodness knows how they've coped with the mathematics curriculum in years 8,9 and 10, because they're missing a lot of learning.”

“It's things like fractions, decimals, percentages, proportional reasoning, solving mathematical problems where they have to do more than one calculation.”

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Survey Says Chaplains Should Be Hired Based On Qualification

A survey found 71% of Australians do not know public school pastoral care workers are hired based on religion instead of qualifications.

Two in three of the 1,379 respondents said they believe school chaplains should be instead hired based on eligibility and experience, and not have to have the endorsement of a religious group.

Chaplains are wellbeing officers that can provide emotional, pastoral and spiritual support in non-religious settings such as public schools.

They often run volunteer community programs, breakfast clubs, lunchtime activities and parent/carer workshops.

The federal government has funded religious chaplains since 2006.

Current Education Minister Jason Clare 'opened up' the funding to include non-religious wellbeing officers in June this year, converting the previous National School Chaplaincy Program to the National Student Wellbeing Program (NSWP).

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Old Tradies As Teachers

British MPs have been told that old tradespeople should be re-employed as teachers to tackle shortage.

If workers in their fifties changed career and became teachers it could help alleviate the teacher recruitment crisis, the Commons education committee heard.

The persistent failure to hit targets for recruiting specialist teachers means children are increasingly being taught science, technology engineering and maths (STEM) subjects by non-specialist teachers.

“There is an awful lot we can pass on...it would be great to get as many fifty-plus people, men and women, back into teaching. It would be an amazing thing to do.”

[Full Story](#)

Merry Christmas

SAASSO wishes you and your family a happy and safe festive season.



High ATAR Leads To High Earning

Achieving a high ATAR score is strongly linked to earning a higher income.

Year 12 students who achieve an ATAR of over 98 earn a median salary by age 30 which is \$33,000 higher than students who score below 70.

The data shows that people who do not go to university earn more than those who do in the first few years after school.

The research also found that people who enter university without an ATAR earn less than those who enter university with an ATAR.

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