Birdwood Primary School

Our journey using constructivist principles
Constructivism at our school emphasizes:

- Identifying and building on prior knowledge
- Thinking
- Understanding
- Reasoning
- Applying knowledge and at the same time, basic skills are not neglected.
- Reflecting

The connections between prior knowledge and new learning creates meaningful understanding.
PALS
Playing and Learning at School

Our PALS program has been designed to incorporate Constructivist Theory and Multiple Intelligences.
PALS is a play program for R/1/2 students to address;

- Students emotional resilience
- Student engagement
- Development of social play skills
- Literacy development
- Numeracy development
- Needs of boys in the JP setting
Constructivism in PALS
Constructivist teachers encourage and accept autonomy and initiative.
Constructivist teachers use manipulative, interactive and physical materials when planning activities to build on student’s prior knowledge.
Constructivist teachers allow student’s responses to drive lessons, shift instructional strategies and alter content- teachable moments.
Constructivist teachers encourage students to engage in dialogue, both with the teacher and with one another.
Constructivist teachers nurture curiosity by planning a variety of tasks for the students to explore.
Constructivist teachers encourage student inquiry by asking thoughtful, open-ended questions and encouraging students to ask questions of each other.

What can you do to make the water flow faster?

What can you do to make the witch appear to be riding the broomstick?
Busy with enterprise activities

Students are actively involved in tasks that are meaningful to them. They are encouraged to be responsible and autonomous.
Organization and management in the constructivist classroom are democratic.

Collating school multi-voting
Students having “control over their own thinking” is important in a constructivist classroom.

- Exploring ways of getting students to ask questions, rather than the teacher asking all the questions, empowers students and helps them to become independent learners.
Students and staff
Birdwood Primary School