

Rockingham school fundraiser spreads Christmas cheer

AT THIS time of year you could forgive children for starting to dream about what they are going to receive at Christmas.

At Rockingham Lakes Primary School, students spent time fundraising and donating gifts for children they are likely to never meet.

YouthCARE chaplain Deb Cunningham said the school had participated in Operation Christmas Child for the last three years.

The program involves filling up shoeboxes with gifts for disadvantaged children all around the world.

“During Term 3 we hold a fundraising dress up day - usually for the Derby Day when the West Coast Eagles play the Fremantle Dockers,” Ms Cunningham said.

“Students bring a gold coin donation in support of the Shoebox Appeal to help pay for the freight of the shoeboxes. This year we filled 50 boxes with gifts that were donated by our wonderfully, generous school community.”

“The conversations that were had whilst we were completing this task were both eye-opening and heartfelt, with the students beginning to understand that it’s not the size of the gift that matters but it is the giving.”

Year 6 student Olivia Spencer said they were involved in collecting, sorting and packing the shoeboxes.

“There are lots of children in the world who don’t have very much and I think all children deserve to receive gifts at Christmas,” she said

“I wish the shoeboxes were bigger so we could fit more gifts in them.

“When I walk around the shops I see things that remind me of the things that I helped pack in the shoeboxes, this makes me feel happy. Packing the shoeboxes was fun.”

Classmate Amy Wolstenholme said participating helped her appreciate what she had.

“Giving is good for the giver and the receiver,” she said.

“Knowing that the kids who receive the shoeboxes are really happy to receive the gifts is a win-win.

“It was challenging to fit some of the teddy bears into the shoeboxes but knowing that these bears are the first thing that the children see when they open the box is pretty awesome.”