Term 4 Newsletter Prep, Year 1 and 2

Level 1 & 2 Assembly Dates;
- Week 1; Friday, October 11th
- Week 4; Friday, November 1st
- Week 8; Friday, December 6th
- Week 10; Friday, December 13th

Prep Prom

As we draw nearer to the end of the year, we are proud to see how much the Preps have grown. To celebrate their achievements, a Prep Prom will be held on Friday 25th of October where children can come in their favourite Fairy Tale costume and show off their dance moves! You and your family are invited to join us to acknowledge all their hard work and memories in their first year of school. Details will be given to you at a later date.
In Term 4, we continue to target specific learning goals in each on the three AusVELS curriculum areas;

1. Reading
2. Writing
3. Speaking and Listening

Reading.
You may have noticed us madly “scribbling” when we listen to students read. This is how we decide the best difficulty level for children to be reading at home and at school. You may be surprised to hear that these levels are actually different. It also gives teachers valuable information to guide future learning experiences. We may target “decoding” which is the ability to sound out and correctly read words. We may target “fluency”, which is how close to a speaking voice the text is read, including making use of punctuation and other expression marks. We may target “comprehension” of what is read, building understanding to a milestone sometime within their first three years, where they are no longer learning to read, but reading to learn.

Writing.
Being a teacher of a Foundation (Prep) class during Term 4, brings huge rewards, particularly when comparing student writing samples collected at the beginning of the year, and comparing them to what students can now produce. Parents are often surprised by their child’s growth in this area. Generally, we are moving into blended sounds (sh, ch, th, ll) as well as refining the most common single sounds made by all letters of the alphabet. It is not unusual for children to confuse vowel sounds (a,e,i,o,u) at this stage and children benefit from target lessons that support learning in this area. Students use their learning goal to explicitly work on a focus area that will move them toward the next writing milestone.

Speaking and Listening.
This is such a broad area and can mean something different to each student. For those where English is an additional language, we are now working toward speaking in full sentences that are grammatically correct. Changing word endings can confuse many children such as “like, liking, liked” and then there are the many exceptions to rules such as “draw, drawing, drew”. Correctly using plurals “cow, cows” is also cause for confusion such as in “sheep” (there is no sheeps!). Social language conventions are modelled and taught such as turn taking, solving conflict and listening to the opinions of others. All children are learning to concentrate and listen for longer periods of time, however, there is a huge range from student to student and they are nearly all classified as normal!
In Prep this term, the students will be immersed in the Inquiry Topic ‘Staying Alive’. This will allow children to learn about the importance of basic needs, including water, food, space and air, and the difference between these “needs” and their “wants”. The children will explore how our five senses help animals, including humans, to survive in their environment.

As part of the unit, students will have an opportunity to be involved in an incursion ‘Responsible Pet Ownership’ where they will learn about safe ways to approach strange dogs, and ways to look after a pet. Very exciting is the opportunity to experience looking after pet chickens as they hatch in class!
**Year 1 Literacy**

In the Term Four, Reading and Viewing Program, the Year One students will continue to develop their skills and understanding in comparing and contrasting information and also identifying detail within texts. The students will be encouraged to develop a deeper understanding of text through questioning techniques that will focus on the literal, inferential and evaluative meaning. A strong emphasis will also be placed on the vocabulary, focussing on aspects of grammar, punctuation and definitions of words. The students will be encouraged to visualise stories, settings and characters by forming a mental picture of what they think the book would look like. Each student has a “Readers Notebook” where they will be recording their understandings, feelings and thoughts about what they have been reading. The Year One students will continue their Independent Reading sessions with “Book Spotlight” at the end of the session, whereby a student will be selected to share a book they have been reading independently. The students will continue to work on their individual reading goals, based on one-to-one teacher conferences.

As part of our Speaking and Listening program, the Year One students will continue participating in oral language activities, set up outside the Year One Classrooms. There will also be many opportunities for the students to present their completed work with the class, perform plays and perform oral presentations.

The writing focus this term will be on Poetry, Narratives, Procedural texts and we will continue to write our weekly learning reflections. The structure of these genres will be explored during on our Inquiry Unit “Spot the Difference” and our Year One Serial “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory”. We will also be doing some further study on nouns, adjectives and verbs. The students will continue handwriting sessions, focussing on correct letter formation, pencil grip and size of letters.

The Year One students will continue to have their weekly spelling test. This term we will continue to focus on middle sounds, end sounds and also tenses. The sounds we will be focussing on include; oo as in boot, oo as in zoo, all as in tall, ar as in car, or as in sport, ow as in cow and also tenses.
Year 1 Numeracy

This term, in Number and Algebra, the students will be modelling, solving and recording division problems using concrete materials. Through open-ended activities they will be identifying and creating halves and quarters of given objects and collections of objects. They will be revising Place Value to 999, using calculators to explore concepts and consolidating their understanding of multiplication, addition and subtraction. In Measurement and Geometry, the students will be studying the properties of 3D shapes, drawing birds –eye view maps and using the language of location to locate positions on a grid. They will be comparing and ordering the mass of different objects by hefting and measuring using informal units, as well as examining a one kilogram weight. In Statistics and Probability, the students will be collecting and classifying data in the form of objects, pictures, statements and numbers to create simple graphs to answer questions or test conjectures of interest.

Year 2 Literacy

This term, the students will be learning about the features typically found in a non-fiction book such as the titles and headings and other features including the contents, index and glossary pages. We will be continuing to explore different reading strategies regarding the CAFÉ reading approach such as summarising, identifying the main idea, determining importance and the authors purpose through a variety of texts. The students will practice both their independent and partner reading skills to become better readers.

Also this term, the students will be experimenting with a variety of new text types as well as revising what we have already learnt so far this year. There will be lots of opportunities for the students to write a variety of procedural texts as well as poetry while practicing their speaking and listening skills. Some of our writing topics in Term four will be integrated with our inquiry topic “Spot the difference”.
Year 2 Numeracy

After three terms of wonderful mathematical learning the Year Twos are spending Term Four revisiting and revising the concepts we’ve been learning about. We will be focusing on extending and enriching student understanding across the mathematical curriculum.

We are also redesigning the way we assign Mathematics as homework, to be more in line with the Michael Ymer approach to teaching and learning. So be prepared to join in and help out, but more importantly, talk about the mathematics your children are doing at school and how this relates to their homework.

Year 1&2 Incursions

The Life Ed van will be visiting this term. Students will be taking part in a session called ‘Harold’s Heroes’. This program explores health issues related to pollution and passive smoking, the safe use and storage of medicines and a range of safe and unsafe behaviours and environments.

Later in the term, CSIRO will be visiting to give the students the opportunity to take part in hands on science experiments. The theme will be ‘Mixing and changing’ and the students will explore various materials, their properties, how we can change them and what happens when different materials are mixed together. Students will practice being good scientists making predictions, observing and discussing their results. There will be some exciting demonstrations that will introduce and explain the concepts involved in the program.
HATS & WATER BOTTLES

Now that the warmer weather is here, all students are required to wear a hat during Term four, to promote being “SUN SMART” in our school. Hats should be named, as should all jumpers, jackets and clothing.

Please ensure your child brings a named water bottle to school every day that contains water and not fizzy drinks or cordial.

2014 Day

As part of the school’s transition program, we will have our 2014 Transition Day on Wednesday 18th December. New students (not including 2014 Prep’s) starting next year, will be encouraged to attend this day as it is an opportunity for all students to get to know their new teacher, classmates and classroom for 2014. During this day, students will be involved in a range of engaging activities that focus on getting to know others and exposing them to expectations of their new year level. To assist in making the move to their new school year easier, this day is also a great opportunity for students to ask any questions they may have about 2014.