Dear Parents of students in Prep,

A big welcome to our 2014 Prep students and their families! It has been an exciting start to the year and we are so proud of our Prep students and how well they have adapted to their new environment with your support! It’s wonderful to see new friendships form in the classroom and in the playground. We hope that they have come home sharing some exciting news about their school experiences! In the next couple of weeks, they will be assigned a Grade 5/6 buddy who will support them both in the classroom with their learning as well as in the playground. Remember that they may appear tired and this is quite normal as they adapt to their new routines. Discuss their day with them and if you have any concerns, please share those with us.

Thank you for returning the nurse’s forms and for making sure that your child has his/her reading bag with the books returned every morning. This is an important routine and we appreciate your support.

This term our unit of work is: ‘School Days’ and ‘Exploring my family history’.

Students will develop the understanding that we can adapt to new and changing environments and that there are things that we can do to build new relationships and friendships. Students will share personal histories and identify personal change from birth to present.

What we expect the students to learn in reading:

As of next Monday, students will select 5 “Just Right” books on a weekly basis and read these daily at school as well as at home with you. This is an important routine and your praise and encouragement as your child’s reading begins to develop, is really important. A friendly reminder to sign the log book nightly to show that you value their efforts as young readers and discuss how they feel about reading and what they may need support with.

This term, students will practise the skill of looking at each page in their book (by going on a picture walk) and think about what is happening on each page. They will make predictions of what will happen in the story before they commence to read (by looking at the front cover and title), during and after they have read the book and ask questions to deepen their understanding of what they read. As they begin to read and notice the words on each page, they will be encouraged to look at the initial letter and get their mouth ready to make the sound that the letter makes, cross checking with the picture.

Students have been introduced to the classroom Word Wall which has their names displayed at the moment but we will soon be adding some high frequency words. These words are: I a the to a was it my we in he they.

Students are encouraged to find these words in their just right books and other print around them and practise reading and writing them quickly.
This term our unit of work is: ‘Being Healthy and Active...a healthy body, a healthy mind’. Students will develop the understanding that there are things we need to do to keep our bodies and minds healthy…nutrition, exercise, hygiene, rest, feeling good and belonging. We have had our first yoga session with Melissa (Wiley’s mum) last week and it was enjoyed by all! Our follow up session will be on Tuesday 23rd July. We have been looking at our snacks and lunches discussing their nutritional value and coming up with some questions and wonderings that we will have clarified as we pose these questions to our dietitian Lisa, (Maddison’s mum) who will be talking to our Prep students on Friday, 2nd of August.

Our swimming program has commenced with 26 of our Prep students attending every Friday afternoon. Please note that when one of the Prep teachers is at the pool, her students are sent to the other two Prep grades for the hour before assembly and are engaged in work related to ‘Being Healthy and Active’.

Our vegetable garden that Lisa, (Lewis’ mum) helped us set up last term is thriving! We thank all our parent volunteers who have been active and assisting with its maintenance. We are hoping to use some of the produce for tasting and even adding to some cooking we may do as we promote healthy eating around the school community.

What we expect the students to learn in reading:
Students will continue to select 5 “Just Right” books on a weekly basis and read these daily at school as well as at home with you. This is an important routine and your praise and encouragement as your child’s reading develops, is really important. A friendly reminder to sign the log book nightly to show that you value their efforts as young readers and discuss their reading goal or how they feel about reading and what they may need support with.

This term, students will further develop a variety of strategies to decode words to help them understand text. They will ask questions before, during and after reading to deepen their understanding of what they read.

Our 12 new high frequency words for the term are…

so, then, she, is, had, there, you, that, but, got, when, one.

Students are encouraged to read and write these automatically.

What we expect the students to learn in writing:
Students will be given daily opportunities to write about things they know about and build on their belief that “they are great young writers with great ideas”. They will be encouraged to write more about their message, whether fiction or factual and include supportive details and examples. They will be supported to begin editing their own writing. They will be asked questions like: Have you read back what you have written? Does it make sense? What changes can you make?

Students will start to discuss their writing with their teacher during a “writing conference” … a ‘chat’ between the ‘writer’ and the teacher. They will be asked questions like:

What writing piece are you working on at the moment? What are you doing as a writer that you’re happy with? What do you need help/support with? This will result in setting an individual writing goal for the student. Just like a reading goal, it will tell the student what he/she needs to practise.

What we expect the students to learn in mathematics:
Students will continue to build on their knowledge of Number and Place Value using concrete materials (counters, icy-pole sticks, unifix blocks, dice, playing cards, ten-frames and calculators) with an emphasis on ‘teen’ numbers. They will be finding the total of two amounts by using the strategy of counting on from the biggest number. They will be making 2digit numbers using icy-pole sticks and ‘trading’ 10 ones for a ten to develop their understanding of place value. For example, 16 is 16 ones or one 10 and 6 ones. They will be locating a number on the 100s chart and looking at one more, one less, 10 more, 10 less to discover pattern. We will be using a range of strategies for adding and subtracting small groups of numbers and developing students’ understanding through stories.

Important Dates:
- Tuesday 23 July, 2nd session of yoga,
- Thursday, 1 August, Celebrating 100th day at school!
- Friday 2 August, talk by dietician Lisa
- Friday 20 September, end of term 3

Specialist timetable:
*Swimming: Friday afternoon
*Footsteps: Preps learning the moves to “Splish Splash, I was taking a bath” every Monday afternoon. We will be performing this as our concert item later on in the year.

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Thank you for your continued support and partnership!

Prep Teachers,
Jamie, Helen and Thomai