2013 PREP INFORMATION LETTER

Dear Parents

As part of our School Policy and commitment to share your student's education we would like to present the following information and welcome any further discussion with you on an individual basis. Naturally this outline is broad and every endeavour is made to meet the individual needs of each child.

LANGUAGE

Oral Language is part of every learning experience in the Prep year. Students will be provided with a rich range of opportunities to engage with each other, to experiment and practise with words, language and conversation.

Early Years Literacy Program

By Term 3, students will be grouped for effective reading instruction and matched to texts which are appropriate to their stage of literacy development and their immediate learning needs. Lessons include both a whole group focus and small group work. The work in small groups includes:

- Guided reading groups where the teacher works intensively with students with similar learning needs.
- Learning centre work where students consolidate literacy understandings either independently or in small groups.

The Reading program will take the form of listening to and discussing stories, individual and shared experiences with big books, literature, poetry, rhymes and recorded class experience books. From these activities students will develop strategies enabling them to match spoken and written words and gain meaning from text by:

- using previous knowledge and experience to predict story lines
- using pictures to assist their understanding of the story
- learning to expect that text makes sense
- using their experience of oral language
- using their knowledge of the conventions of print
- using knowledge of frequently used words
- using sound/letter knowledge to attempt unknown words

Take home books support class work by reinforcing and practising skills taught. For Preps, this will commence in the second week of March.

Initially, the books are to be read to and shared with your child, helping them to tune into the reading process.

As your child observes you read and participate in the enjoyment of books, they will begin to gain an insight into how reading works.

As the year proceeds, the students will then bring home books, which should be easy to read with little challenge. These books also give families an opportunity to share books together. This could take the form of discussing the book, pictures, content, etc before and during reading. This enables them to utilise their skills and strategies in a successful manner.

IF YOUR CHILD CHOOSES TO BRING HOME A BOOK THEY HAVE READ BEFORE, this will provide the opportunity to enjoy favourite books and at the same time, prove valuable for reinforcing skills and experiencing success. IT MAY HAPPEN THAT YOUR CHILD WILL OCCASIONALLY CHOOSE A BOOK THAT IS A LITTLE HARD. In this case, please make sure that reading stays an enjoyable and relaxed activity, with parents either sharing the reading or reading the story to the child. Valuable learning could then be had by discussing the story briefly.
Written Language
In Prep, students will be encouraged to record their thoughts in drawing then writing. As the students progress through the school, written language will be developed through the use of teacher demonstration and shared writing about individual and class experiences.

Students’ skills will develop as they refine their spelling and reading strategies, word attack and word knowledge.

Providing your child with frequent opportunities to write for various purposes will enhance your child’s writing skills and encourage them to take more risks with their writing.

Word Study will equip the students with knowledge of the sounds letters make as a basis for hearing and recording sounds in words.

They will also develop a core of frequently used words that they can spell correctly. Encouragement to occasionally practise these words at home will support your child’s writing in the classroom.

MATHEMATICS
A wide variety of practical activities will be used to enable students to see maths as part of their everyday world. Counting, problem solving, pattern and order, measurement, and spatial relations will be presented at a Prep level through songs, games, practical activities and application sheets. Please encourage your child to see maths all around them at home too.

INQUIRY BASED LEARNING

Inquiry Based Learning is a student-centred learning approach in which the student is actively involved in the learning process. Through a developed concept, the students identify information needs, then form worthwhile investigations, selecting appropriate information sources to gather relevant information. They evaluate and sort the information in which they present and act on.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES @ WNPS

Restorative Practices is ......

- A whole school behaviour management approach, designed to enhance student engagement and productivity.
- About relationships between people who make up a community
- Practised by all staff and students
- Maintains a consistent language and strategies and follows well defined values as listed below.

Activities in the classrooms provide students with opportunities to model and discuss situations that may arise in a forum that allows all to be heard and acknowledged.

Restorative Practices provides a caring, stimulating and dynamic learning environment which engages students, and supports and encourages them to achieve their personal best, in all endeavours.

Through restorative Practices we aim to foster the School values ...

Excellence | Integrity | Respect | Responsibility | Understanding

Stop, Think, Do
The Personal Development component of our Health Program is STOP, THINK, DO. Within the Restorative Practices framework, we include ‘Stop, Think, Do’. This strategy encourages students to give themselves time to make considered judgements and decisions.

MUSIC
Music will be an integral part of the student's work encouraging them to sing, play, perform and listen in the classroom. One session per week will be conducted by Mr David Perry. On Friday mornings the Prep grades have a Music Assembly. In Term 4 the Preps prepare for the Christmas Concert.
PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)
Physical Education will be taken by specialist Mr Trent O’Sullivan. Comfortable and sensible footwear is essential.
♦ If your child is unable to participate in Phys Ed please send a note
♦ We intend to take students to the Gym at the YMCA in Term 4

PERCEPTUAL MOTOR PROGRAM (PMP)/PLATOON PE
“PMP aims to teach the child perceptions and understandings of himself/herself and his/her world through movement/motor experiences.” – J Bulluss & P Cole
PMP is a Perceptual Motor Program in which children rotate through a graded sequence of physical activities. PMP will be conducted weekly (Wednesdays).

PREP BLOG
In Prep we have a blog to use with the Prep students and parents. The aim of the blog is to provide an avenue for discussion and collaboration. It is a powerful tool that opens up communication between students, parents and teachers. A blog can provide information about class events and calendars, school projects, home tasks, videos, photographs (of students’ work, class displays, etc), music and more. It allows parents to ‘take a peek’ inside the classroom and get an idea of the incredible learning that happens each day. It also allows parents to comment and share in their child’s learning.
The web address of the Prep blog is http://wnpsprep2013.global2.vic.edu.au/

ART/CRAFT
Art and Craft will be taken in the Art room by Ms Clare Meehan, and complemented by the classroom teachers. Additional Art lessons will be held on various days so smocks are to be left at school.

LIBRARY/INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNICATION (ICT)
Library time is once a week where students enjoy stories and may borrow a book. The library is also open most lunch times for student’s enjoyment. Our Library Specialist is Miss Rachel Mercuri. A library book bag is essential to protect borrowed books. As well as Library activities, the students will be involved in a Learning Technologies Program with Ms Rachel Janis.

WORKING TOGETHER …..
We would appreciate your help by encouraging your child and supporting our program in the following ways:
♦ Ensure your child has a clearly named bottle of water each day.
♦ Ensure your child has a clearly named school hat to wear in Terms 1 & 4.
♦ Reading / sharing take home books daily, and caring for these.
♦ Sharing and displaying your child’s work.
♦ Teaching your child to tie shoelaces
♦ Ensuring belongings are clearly named (please check regularly)
♦ Checking your child’s bag for notices/letters
♦ Replying promptly to notices and requests.
♦ Carefully monitoring your child’s health especially once colds etc, become prevalent.
♦ Writing a note to explain absences unless you have spoken to the teacher.
♦ Prior to going on extended family holidays or cultural events/holidays, a note must be given to the classroom teacher for approval by the principal.
♦ Ensuring that we are notified of any change of going home arrangements and that students leaving earlier are collected from the classroom. (You will need to sign the "In/Out Book" at the office for this).
♦ Notify us of changes of address, phone numbers in case of emergencies.

It would be appreciated if students had some fruit as we have a ‘FRUIT AND WATER’ session after the lunch break.
HOMEWORK
Take-home books will be sent home daily. Initially, these books are intended for parents to read to their students. As the year proceeds, the students will be given books that they are able to read. Later in the year the students may be given tasks as per their Learning Improvement Plans. They may also be required on occasion to collect specific information or resources for classroom activities. The time allocation for homework at Prep level is up to, but not more than 30 minutes daily.

*** ALLERGIES ***
As there are students with SERIOUS allergies, it is important that students do not swap or share food. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT STUDENTS DO NOT USE THEIR CANTEEN MONEY TO BUY TREATS/FOOD FOR OTHERS. If your child has a food allergy, would you please supply a container of treats so that they can participate in birthday celebrations, etc.

Also, some of our students are allergic to animals, so please check with the teacher before bringing pets for ‘Show and Tell’.

SPECIAL DAYS TO NOTE:

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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>School Assembly – 8.50am to Prep courtyard</td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Bank Day</td>
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<td>Music – J16 and J18</td>
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<td>PE</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Art</td>
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<td>PMP</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Library/ICT</td>
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<td>Prep Assembly</td>
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<td>Music – J17 and J15</td>
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We trust this information will be useful and we welcome your involvement in your child's Prep year. We will discuss any concerns we have with you and we encourage you to do the same.

Thanking you

Bonnie Lewis, Sue Pearson, Sandy Doull & Jenny Storer