Dear Students, Parents and Guardians,

Welcome back to Term 1 2012!

The first two weeks of the year were filled with camp preparation and we all had a wonderful time but now we are ready to get back to school and the all-important ‘Three Rs’ – Really Refreshing Routines. (Yay!)

Some important routines to be aware of;

**Take Home Pocket**

Students all have a take home pocket to keep their diary, current reader, homework book and practice cards in. This folder needs to be brought to and from school each day. It will also be used to take notes or forms safely home.

**Homework**

*Daily Reading* – 15 minutes daily including at least three times a week reading aloud for 5-10 minutes to a family member. (This skill is important even for very fluent readers. We often skip over unfamiliar words when reading in our heads even though we can get the gist of their meaning from the context of the sentence. It is important to be able to articulate every word in a text.)

Parents – please sign in the diary each time your child reads as we will be tallying the total “Nights of Reading” across the school this year. Individuals will be recognised at the 50, 100, 200 nights milestones.

*Spelling words* – Daily practise of spelling words. Can you spell them backwards?

*Conundrum* – Each week I will send home a puzzle for the kids to try and solve. This can be a whole family activity as many of the puzzles are quite difficult. We will discuss answers on a Friday so please keep any solutions to yourself until then. (Older siblings who have seen the puzzles before – please don’t tell!)

*Maths* – you choose between 10 minutes or 600 seconds practice each day. A suggestion sheet of activities is in the take home pocket. Incidental practise throughout the day works best and the car activities are good for achieving this.

*Worksheet* – most weeks there will be a short worksheet that will reflect the topics being covered in class. The answers for these should be written neatly in the homework book (Royal Darwin Hospital!), not on the sheet itself. The completed homework is to be handed in for correction each Friday morning.

**Topics**

This term we are reading ‘James and the Giant Peach’ and we will be seeing a stage performance of the story in early Term 2. We would also like to watch the movie and ask the children to compare and contrast the three modes of storytelling. The film is rated PG and it has mild violence and a couple of scary images but nothing worse than in the first Harry Potter film. If you would like to speak to me further about this film or would prefer your child does not watch it then please see me at school.

Plants and gardening will be a focus this term as the senior grades work towards setting up our school vegetable garden.

Literacy will focus on parts of speech including nouns, verbs and adjectives.

Numeracy will focus on core skills and knowledge including place value, number patterns and mental computation strategies.

I am looking forward to a wonderful year with this great group of students.

Regards

Rod Christensen