Welcome everyone to Grade Prep and One 2011.
I hope you have all had an enjoyable holiday and are looking forward to getting back to school. There are lots of exciting things planned for 2012 and this newsletter is to help out with many organisational aspects of how our class operates.
If you have any questions about the program or school issues, please ask. There are lots of new and different things about how school operates and they may need some clarifying. Make sure you read the school newsletter that comes out on Tuesdays for more whole school information.

Returning to school.
The Prep and Grade One years are an opportunity for young children to become more independent. We would like the children to be responsible, organised learners by remembering things and be encouraged to do things by themselves. Obviously they will need your guidance and supervision, and they become very proud when they can do tasks themselves. Please encourage them right from the start to carry in their own school bags and unpack their belongings needed for the day. This will be explained to the children as routines are established.
Hats are a necessary part of our uniform. If your child forgets their hat they will be encourage to play in our covered courtyard. Each child can leave their hat in their bag locker if parents prefer. Then the hat is always at school. But some children may need the hat for after school care too so for them it should just stay in their bag.

Specialist Program
Specialist teacher programs will operate on the following days. Specialist teach the children programs to enhance the school program and it gives the children an opportunity to work with other teachers. This time is used by classroom teachers to plan. The children may mention other teachers they work with.
Music with Jennifer Nelson on Tuesdays.
Physical Education with Louise Leyton on Tuesdays.
School Library will be Wednesdays with Mrs Clark
Marc Van with Mr Bucknall: Every second Thursday or Friday
Art with Mrs Harford on Mondays
Our support teacher is Tanya Laidlaw.
Each student will need an art smock – this way we can protect our lovely uniforms. No Art smock, no exciting messy activities. Your child will be given alternative activities for sessions without smocks. Some smocks are still at school from last year if you are missing yours
Appropriate footwear is also required for Phys. Ed. If they are not prepared with correct footwear they will also be given alternative activities. If you don't want them wearing their runners to school encourage them to bring them and then change their footwear beforehand.

Fruit Friday
Fruit is encouraged everyday, and Friday is a sharing day. On Fridays children can bring along a piece of fruit to slice and share. We have found with younger children they tend to eat more fruit if it is cut up. It is also an opportunity to try something new if they wish. If it is suitable, you can cut the fruit before it comes to school, that saves time, (watermelon for example, but not bananas or apples. A basket will be provided to put fruit in.
**Parent Helpers**

We are looking for parents to participate in classroom programs such as Reading, small group work, Perceptual Motor Program (PMP), word practice and Spelling. Individual reading is done daily at approximately 9am. Spelling tests are conducted on Friday 9 - 10 am for grade One and parent helpers are needed to help this program run efficiently. Our PMP program will operate around 9am for half an hour this involves supervision of a small group of children through a physical activity. This will start later in the term. Let me know if you are interested in helping on any day with any program and more detailed information will be provided. Many parents are unable to help in the classroom, but there are many other ways you can participate in many other school events.

You may have something suitable to add to our themes or know of a good resource for us to use in the classroom. Just let us know. If you have toys or dress ups that you are wanting to remove, our classroom may appreciate your seconds. We appreciate any support and assistance you are able to give. Please note that it is school policy that all parent helpers have a current working with children check and you must sign in and out at the office when you are staying to help with a program.

**Homework**

The children are encouraged to read most nights. And it is an expectation that parents will read with their children every night too. In their take home satchel for Term One, they will have a levelled reader as well as a book to share with parents. The books are levelled from 1 to 30. Moving up through levels is a process and linked to the child’s own personal development and not a competition. If necessary read the book with your child and encourage them to read it after you. Modelling the correct reading behaviours helps to improve the reading skills of children. There will also be another book. The second book to share is not to be read by the child. It is intended for it to be read to them. Read a variety of books, visit the library and choose together. It is a good opportunity to spend some time together.

When you are reading together try to:

- Always browse through the book first. (Parents can read the book first and then the children read it back, especially to begin with.)
- Always remain positive.
- Aim for success.
- Beginner readers may memorise the text, this is okay and is part of the beginning reading process.
- As you read the book together discuss the pictures/what is happening/ask opinions, feelings if possible.
- Encourage them to retell the story in their own words.
- Reading is expected to be an enjoyable experience. It is never a test of word recognition.
- Please do not cover the pictures as these give the children cues.
- Try to remember to Pause/ Prompt and Praise when children are reading to you.

The Grade One students will also have spelling words to learn each week. To begin with, these words will come from the 200 most used words lists. Grade Prep students will have words to learn to read. These start with the 12 most used words, called the ‘Golden Words’ and continue until they can read the 100 most used words. This is quite an achievement. Children are rewarded for nights of reading milestones. Records of this are kept in their diaries.
Supplies
The children are supplied with most of what they need, but are welcome to bring along stationery of their own. I would appreciate a box of tissues per child as these seem to always run out. It is expected that all children have an Art smock, library bag for school library and wear appropriate footwear for sport especially on Tuesdays. The cloth bag (Given to children at the start of the year) is the Mobile Library (Marc Van) library bag.

Show and Tell
Below is a table of the days of the week and when your child will have a short time to talk to the grade for ‘Show and Tell”. It isn’t always necessary to have something to show, children can tell. It is a good idea to help prepare your child for their day, ask them what they think they might talk about and help them to choose something that will be of interest to others. This is an opportunity to practice public speaking and all the skills required to speak to a group as well as being a good audience.

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<td>Matthew K</td>
<td>Adelle</td>
<td>Amber</td>
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Themes/ Curriculum Term One
All schools use the Victorian Essential Learning Standards guidelines when deciding what is expected to be learnt at each level. Preps work towards achieving Level 1 and Grade One have 2 years to achieve Level 2.

Our school follows a social skills program called Program Achieve. This program focuses on 5 main social skills: Organisation, Getting Along, Persistence, Resilience and Confidence. Every term is devoted to one main skill and smaller components of each skill are taught along the way. The importance of these skills is recognised formally in fortnightly awards given out at Monday morning assemblies. The social skill focus for term one is Getting Along.

Physical Education sessions will have a track and field focus, with the interschool athletic sports taking place on……………...

Our major focus will be on Personal Learning. This includes understanding the school rules, getting along with others, following routines and developing friendships and how to become a good learner. Our Humanities theme for the term is me and my family.

Language skills will have a focus on the alphabet and sounds, handwriting, story writing and reading development.

Maths will follow the schools’ Maths Policy. It will involve number recognition, counting, basic processes (addition and subtraction), measurement, time and shape recognition.

The first few weeks will be revision for Grade One to consolidate their skills and to make them feel confident.

PMP
PMP stands for Perceptual Motor Program. "A Perceptual Motor Program aims to develop a child's perceptions and understandings of him/her self and his/her world through movement and motor experiences"

A Perceptual Motor Program aims to give the child experiences in seeing, hearing, touching, processing, making perceptual judgements and reacting though carefully sequenced activities which children enjoy doing like running, hopping, skipping, jumping, balancing, crawling, climbing, throwing, catching, bowling, sliding, etc., using a variety of common and specially designed
equipment. We aim to run this program for our Preps and Ones for half and hour on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings later in the term. We will need parent helpers for this program.

**Interviews**
A more formal time set aside for discussions is at Parent/Teacher interviews after school on Tuesday 22nd February for Grade One parents. Prep parents will have their interview on another arranged time within the first few weeks of school on Wednesdays. The Prep children all have an assessment on literacy and numeracy skills. This helps us identify a starting point for your child’s learning. This will be conducted by me on Wednesdays with your child. The Grade One students will be assessed at timetabled sessions during the first few weeks of term.

**Wednesdays**
Feb 8th, 15th, 22nd 29th are days off for the Preps. On these days we will do interviews with the prep children and a parent/guardian. The grade ones will be together with either Wendy or myself. The normal school program will operate for Grade One on Wednesdays. On the last Wednesday, the 29th, a ‘get together’ of Prep parents and children is traditionally organised at Civic Park in Warragul.

**School Newsletters.**
Every Tuesday a school newsletter is published and this is a communication about issues that are important to the whole school community. The newsletter is distributed to the oldest person in the family. Please make sure you read it.

**Diaries**
Every child has a diary. This book is used as a parent/teacher communication book and is kept in the large pencil case satchel. The diary has the names of books taken home as well as spelling words and any other notices. Parents are also encouraged to write in the diary if teachers need to be informed of events.

**Spare Clothes.**
Sometimes accidents happen. If a spare pair of underwear and shorts etc are available in bags the children can easily change without being embarrassed.

**Names**
Please ensure all articles of clothing are named. If your child misplaces hats etc if they are named they eventually find their way back. This includes lunchboxes, drink bottles, library bags and art smocks please.

We are looking forward to a year where the children develop as responsible class members and good learners. It will also be a great opportunity to develop new friendships both for the children and parents and build many skills. It is exciting to work with each of your children, to help them and see their development.

If you have any concerns or questions please make a time to see me.

Yours sincerely,

Teresa Martyn (Classroom teacher) and Jane Smith (Integration aide)