Welcome to the first edition of our class newsletter. We have had a fantastic but extremely busy start to the year. It has been wonderful to watch all the children settle smoothly into the routines at Pre-primary. Establishing familiar routines early on will help to create a safe, happy and positive learning environment for all.

We have begun the year with the theme ‘All About Me’, which is a great way for us to get to know our students, their interests and their families. Children have a natural curiosity to explore concepts about themselves and the world that they live in. Through this theme, we are encouraging the development of a positive self image and awareness of their individual capabilities and responsibilities.

A big part of Pre-Primary is working together as a whole class and in small groups. This term, a large emphasis will be placed on developing appropriate and positive social skills to work together cooperatively. We will be doing lots of class and team building activities to help foster a cohesive learning environment. The ability to cooperate and communicate effectively is an important life skill. We plan to work in small groups for approximately five weeks at a time to allow the children the opportunity to work with all of their peers, to form friendships and respect for everyone in their class. This supports our schools Values Program too.

From Miss Carrigg

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Early Literacy Skills

The development of strong phonological awareness skills is essential at this young age, as it is a vital tool for children if they are to experience success when reading and writing. It is the awareness of syllables, words in sentences, word segments (c/at) and individual letter sounds (phonemes).

During our daily literacy blocks, many of the activities will be based on:

- Syllables (beats in words = el/e/phant)
- Rhyme (house/mouse)
- Alliteration (words that start with the same sound - pretty pink pigs painting pictures)
- Segmenting the first sound and rime patterns (c/at)
- Blending and separating words (j-u-g = jug)
- Manipulating words (change the m in mat for h = hat)

Phonics knowledge is also a significant part of our literacy block. It is imperative that your child develops fluency with their letter recognition and formation, as this is the foundation for reading and writing development. Please refer to the alphabet chart provided at the Parent Information Session during Week 3 to assist your child when practising at home.
Parent Helpers

The Parent Helper roster will be available soon. We would love a special helper daily between 8.30am-10.30am to assist with our literacy blocks and the general routine. Parents and Grandparents are very welcome to help, just nominate a day on the roster. Please ensure you have completed a Confidential Declaration 2016 form prior to being our helper. You will also need to sign in at the office that morning and wear the Parent Helper badge.

Library

We visit the school Library on Fridays. Each child needs to bring a library bag to borrow a book. This can then be exchanged for another book the following Friday. Visiting the library is a wonderful opportunity to stimulate a love of reading with your child. It may be nice to share some time together in the evenings or on the weekend reading the story. Reading to your child will help them to develop their language and listening skills and, motivate them to improve their own reading ability. It also assists in expanding their imagination and knowledge. Borrowing books teaches children to value these resources and be responsible. Remember to keep this experience enjoyable and have fun engaging in the conversations. Happy reading!

Crunch time

We have recently begun crunch time. We are inviting each child to bring a small, labelled container of fruit (or vegetable) pieces each day which they can eat in the afternoon. For example a handful of grapes, carrot sticks, 1/2 an apple. This is for your child only. It is a light snack to help sustain concentration, so please keep it small.

The Playground

We have noticed a few children playing on the playground in the K/PP area before and after school. The playground area is for use at recess and lunch time only. If arriving before 8.30am, our school policy is to wait in the undercover area until the bell rings. Supervision is available in this area.

Library Helpers

Our Librarian, Mrs Beed is always looking for volunteers to assist with library duties. Any assistance to help cover, repair and shelf books would be greatly appreciated.

Art Shirts

Please feel free to bring an art shirt for your child to wear during painting activities, to protect their school uniform as best we can. Please ensure it is labelled. Your child may keep it in their big tray.

Aussie Day Dress Up

On Friday 12th February, we celebrated Australia Day by dressing up. It was an opportunity to commemorate our beautiful country and celebrate what is means to be Australian. If you were lucky enough to stay for the parade, you would have seen a terrific amount of effort was put into dressing up by many across the school. It was a sea of blue, white and red. Many thanks to those who were able to donate towards the Yarloop Bushfire Appeal. I’m sure the people who have lost their homes and school will be very grateful for the support we can offer. A true act of Australian mateship.