

GRADE PREP NEWSLETTER
TERM 2

Dear Prep Parent/Guardian,

We hope you had a restful and enjoyable holiday break and would like to welcome you to a busy and exciting Term 2. The way in which the Prep children have settled into our school routines has been very impressive and pleasing and we look forward to sharing another highly rewarding term together.

SCHOOL VALUES

At Iramoo, our values are **Respect, Responsibility and Relationships**. These values are promoted within the Prep area and entire school on a daily basis. The children participate in planned learning activities to help develop their understanding of these values. Throughout Term 1, the children also completed an in-depth exploration of the 'Top 10 Not Negotiable Social Skills' developed by the Iramoo school community.



This term, to further promote our core school values of **Respect, Responsibility and Relationships**, our focus will be getting along with others. This will be introduced to the children through the implementation of a social skills and values program called '**You Can Do It!**'. The Prep children will be introduced to characters associated with this social skills and values program, which supports children in leading successful and happy lives. This term children will meet the characters **Gabby Get Along** and **Connie Confidence**.

- **Gabby Get Along** teaches children to work and play together nicely and follow important rules.
- **Connie Confidence** teaches children to stand up tall and speak in a voice that everyone can hear. Children learn to not be afraid of making mistakes when learning something new.

LITERACY

In Term 2 the children will be continuing to build upon their existing knowledge of the alphabet and encouraged to use this knowledge to assist with reading and writing words. The children will learn to recognise and name alphabet letters in both uppercase and lowercase form and identify the common sounds that the letters can make within words. They will also continue to practise writing alphabet letters correctly during formal handwriting sessions conducted on a weekly basis.

We are currently introducing the children to new letters and high frequency words each week. Throughout the week, children are involved in a range of meaningful reading and writing activities, which incorporate the new letter(s) and word(s). The high frequency words being taught are common words that the children will encounter in a range of books and use in their own writing. A thorough knowledge of these words and the alphabet is crucial to your child's Literacy development.

To help your child become familiar with the alphabet and the high frequency words you can:

- identify simple household objects that start or end with a particular letter/sound
- play games of I Spy using different letters and sounds (e.g. "I spy with my little eye something beginning with s")
- have your child regularly sing the associated rhyme for each letter (e.g. "monkeys are munching m m m")
- say the letters and words aloud and practise writing them with a range of writing tools (e.g. pencils, textas, crayons or on computer programs such as Paint, Kid Pix or Word)
- make the words with play dough or magnetic letters
- write the letters/words on small cards and play games such as Snap, Concentration or Tic Tac Toe
- find letters/words in catalogues, newspapers, magazines and take home books.

*The manilla folder containing the alphabet chart and high frequency word list will be updated by your child's teacher **each week**. Please ensure that it is kept in your child's blue take home reading bag.*

It is important for your child to continue to read at home to develop good 'home learning' routines, even in the first year of school. We ask that children read their take home reading book with an adult **every night**.

To help your child develop good home reading routines please:

- Find a quiet area in the house to read the take home book together so that your child can concentrate (*not in front of the television*).
- Discuss the book first. Talk about what *might* happen in the story and use the *pictures* to help make sense of the story. The book that is brought home each night should be *easy* for your child to read so that he/she can develop confidence and enjoy the reading experience with you. More challenging books are read at school to allow the teacher to provide the necessary support and strategies to allow your child to develop their reading ability.
- When your child has difficulty with a word, use the **3 Ps**:
Pause – allow a little time for your child to check the pictures and the words to try to work out the meaning by him/herself.
Prompt – give a hint such as, "What might make sense there and start with that letter?"
Praise all efforts. If your child is still unsure after a try, tell him/her the word so that he/she doesn't lose the meaning of the story.

- After reading the book, ask your child simple questions about the story such as, “*What was your favourite part?*” and “*What happened at the end of the story?*” to help build your child’s comprehension skills.
- Provide uninterrupted time for your child to read *independently* for at least 5 minutes each day.
- Sign the reading diary **each night** and encourage *your child* to be responsible for returning the book, blue bag and diary **each day**.

SHOW & TELL

‘Show & Tell’ is an important part of our literacy program, which helps children develop and enhance their speaking and listening skills. During ‘Show & Tell’, children are required to share *special news* or *items of personal interest* with the rest of the class and respond to questions asked by their peers. *All children* are expected to share *every week* on their designated ‘Show & Tell’ day. You can help your child prepare for ‘Show & Tell’ each week by talking with him/her about the news or personal item that he/she plans to share. You can also help prepare your child by discussing and brainstorming ‘good questions’ to ask classmates about their ‘Show & Tell’ news/items.

NUMERACY

This term we will continue to develop students’ understanding of numbers 0 to 20 and beyond. We will also cover the concepts of Space (shapes and location), Measurement (length, time and daily cycles) and Patterns.

To help your child at home, include them in activities such as:

- counting forwards and backwards to 20 and beyond from different starting points
- counting objects around the house or on the way to and from school. “*Let’s count all the blue cars*”
- setting the table (counting the number of people and putting out the correct number of plates, glasses, forks etc.)
- singing number songs such as ‘Five Little Ducks’ and ‘Ten In The Bed’
- finding numbers in a range of places (magazines, books, signs, prices, packaging, letterboxes, calendars, number plates etc.) and discussing the *purpose* of the numbers in each situation. “*The numbers on this price tag tell me how much money I need to pay for this if I want to buy it*”
- sorting, organising and counting collections such as, clothes, toys, books, shells, rocks, birthday candles. “*Can you put all of the dolls together?*” “*How many red toys do you have?*”
- identifying objects at home and in your neighbourhood in the shape of circles, rectangles, squares and triangles
- playing games of ‘Simon Says’ using location words (*on, under, in, behind, next to, over, beside, between etc.*) e.g. “*Simon Says put your hands on your head. Simon Says put your hands behind your back*”
- comparing objects in relation to their length and mass. “*Is your book longer or shorter than the table?*” “*Is the pencil heavier or lighter than the book?*” “*Who is the tallest person in our family?*”
- discussing activities completed at a common time each day. “*We eat breakfast in the morning. You have a bath in the evening.*” “*What else do we usually do in the day/night?*”
- wearing and regularly telling the time on an inexpensive *analogue* watch
- writing important events, such as the date of his/her birthday, on a calendar displayed in a prominent position in your house

MATHLETICS & ABC READING EGGS

In our Prep classrooms, we use two interactive e-learning resources called Mathletics and ABC Reading Eggs to compliment our teaching of Mathematics and English. Both programs originated in Australia.

Mathletics and Reading Eggs provide opportunities for your child to improve his/her mathematics and reading skills in an engaging and fun way. The primary goal is to improve mathematics understandings and essential reading skills.

Each child has their own username and password in order to access the programs.

Mathletics can be found at www.mathletics.com.au

ABC Reading Eggs can be found at www.readingeggs.com.au

If you require further information about Mathletics and Reading Eggs or your child’s own log in details in order to use the programs at home, please contact your child’s teacher.

THEME

In Term 2 students will be studying the themes ‘*The House that Jack Built*’ and ‘*What’s it made of?*’.

- ‘*The House that Jack Built*’: In this unit of study the children will develop an understanding of, and make connections between, structures and buildings in our environment. Children will develop an awareness of how structures are built and the materials and tools that are used to build them. They will explore various strategies, tools and materials that we can use to build structures at school. At the conclusion of the unit children will understand the similarities and differences between their houses and others around the world.
- ‘*What’s it made of?*’ All around us are things made from interesting materials that have observable properties. In this unit children will have the opportunity to explore, through hands-on activities, what things are made of in the school environment and the properties of the materials used to make them.

CLASSROOM HELPERS

Your help and assistance in our Prep classrooms during the school day is greatly appreciated and *highly valued*. If you are able to offer your assistance please inform your child's teacher of your availability. We would like to sincerely thank all of the family members who have already helped in the Prep area in a variety of ways and look forward to continuing to work with you for the remainder of the year.

LIBRARY

Our library is a very valuable resource in our school and we expect all children to borrow a book each fortnight. Prep library sessions will be held on every second Tuesday (for children in OKB, OLM, OMD and OAN) and every second Friday (for children in OML).

Please ensure that your child *reads* and returns his/her book *every week before* their library day. If possible, read the book together over the weekend to allow your child to return his/her book *and bag on Monday*. Library sessions are part of the school curriculum and all children's borrowing records are monitored closely. ***We would like to have 100% of the children in grade Prep borrowing every visit.***

KIDS & FRUIT

For the past ten years our school has been involved in a Kids & Fruit program aimed at developing the daily eating of fresh fruit as a lifelong habit for our children.

Our fruit is A grade quality and delivered by Bozo's Werribee Fruit Supply. It is sorted and counted each day by the volunteers who work in our canteen.

Each morning when the class lunch order monitors deliver the lunch order basket to the canteen, they return with a basket of child size pieces of fresh fruit, which is shared amongst all of the children in each class at approximately 10.30 every morning, just before recess.

The fruit supplied to our children is good quality, appropriate size and includes a range of different varieties and types. The cost is very affordable at 30 cents per child per day which is an average of **\$15 per term** (30 cents x 5 days = \$1.50, \$1.50 x 10 weeks = \$15).

Our Prep students were not involved with Kids & Fruit last term but they will be involved from now on and you will receive a Kids & Fruit request for payment at the beginning of each term.

Please let your child's teacher know if there is any reason why your child may not be participating in this program.

MID-YEAR REPORTS

Each child will receive an individual report at the end of Term 2 detailing the progress he/she has made in the first half of the year. Parent/Teacher interviews will also be held at the end of term. *All* parents are encouraged to be involved in the interview process to discuss the contents of the report and learning goals for the second half year.

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

It is important for children's academic development that they attend school ***every day***. Children who are frequently absent miss important learning time and sequential learning activities. If your child is absent from school a signed note is required when they return to explain their absence. To maximise children's learning opportunities, it is also vital that they arrive at school on time. School commences at **8.50 a.m.** Children who are late must obtain a late pass from the office before entering their classroom. ***Please aim to have your child at school by 8.45 a.m. each day.*** This allows time for your child to go to the toilet before the bell and not interrupt his/her own literacy learning or the learning of other children.

WEATHER/CLOTHING

As the colder weather approaches, it is extra important for the children to have a change of clothes (socks and underpants) at school. This will cover your child not only if he/she has a toileting accident, but also in case of a fall into a puddle or mud. Children are encouraged to bring a coat, scarf and/or beanie to school on colder days to help keep them warm when they are *outside*. As these items are not part of the school uniform, they will not be allowed to be worn inside the classroom. Please ***label all items*** of clothing clearly with your child's name. If your child has any lost clothing please check the classroom, Prep bag area and lost property. All lost property is placed into a large white wheelie bin, which is located in the corridor near the Art room.

LINING UP

On *Monday mornings*, the Prep children are now attending our whole school assemblies. As of **Monday, May 1** children will be expected to line up at the front of the school for our whole school assemblies. It is particularly crucial for your child to be at school by **8.45 a.m.** each Monday to ensure that he/she does not miss the important information being shared at our whole school assemblies and has sufficient time to line up in the appropriate area with his/her class. *While the national anthem is playing latecomers must wait until the end of the anthem before joining their grade.*

The Prep children have displayed excellent manners and been attentive listeners at all of the whole school assemblies that we have attended so far. The Prep teachers are extremely proud of this respectful behaviour and look forward to seeing it continue for the rest of the year.

From Tuesday through to Friday, the Prep children continue to line up in the usual place near our classrooms at the back of the school. If it is raining before school, children need to listen for an announcement and follow the instructions given. At times, particularly when the rain is heavy, the children may be instructed to enter their classroom from **8.35 a.m.** *Children are not to enter the classroom before school on any other occasion unless advised by a teacher.*

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- The main corridor past the office is not a thoroughfare. ***If you are not going to the office, uniform shop or sickbay please use one of the side corridors to go between the Prep area and front of the school.***
- ***Children are not permitted to play on the equipment after school.*** The key responsibility of the yard duty teacher at this time of day is to ensure that all children have been safely collected. When there are a number of children 'hanging around' the school grounds after 3.00 p.m. and playing on the equipment, it makes it very difficult for the yard duty teacher to determine whether or not there are any children who are still waiting to be picked up. Furthermore, when there is a large crowd of adults within the grounds, it makes it difficult for the yard duty teacher to monitor the presence of 'strangers'. To support the teachers in keeping our children safe after school and ensuring that they are being collected by an appropriate person, it is greatly appreciated if you leave the school grounds after collecting your child and not allow him/her or any siblings to play on the equipment between 3 and 3.30 p.m.

**KIRBY BEBEND, MARK DOWNIE (ASSISTANT CO-ORDINATOR),
MORGAN LEWIS, LAURA MEEHAN (CO-ORDINATOR) & AN NGUYEN
PREP TEACHERS**

SPECIALIST CLASSES

Below is a brief outline of what all Grade Prep students will be learning about this term in our specialist areas.

Visual Arts

The theme '*Indigenous Australia*' will inspire artworks created by Grade Prep students in Term 2. They will begin with a boomerang activity that will involve them exploring patterns and mark making. Students will then move onto a painting task, which will help them further develop their fine motor skills. They will then move onto some construction work looking at native Australian animals. Students will construct a number of different animals including a koala and a colourful parrot. The skill focus this term will be on cutting, painting and construction.

Performing Arts

During this term, students will participate in singing, moving to music and playing simple instruments. Through these activities, they will develop skills in using dynamics (loud and soft) and tempo (fast and slow). They will use sounds to tell a story. Students will learn to follow the beat of the music and will also take part in simple dance activities. They will develop their acting skills by performing the story of Snow White. This term the students will be introduced to opera through an interactive presentation of Hansel and Gretel. At the end of the term students will participate in karaoke activities to revise these skills and have some fun!

Physical Education (P.E.)

Throughout this term students will be developing basic ball skills. They will be introduced to skills such as bouncing, rolling, throwing and catching. They will be using a range of ball sizes to enhance their hand eye coordination. Students will have the skills demonstrated to them and will be given the opportunity to practise the skill in groups, with a partner and by themselves. Students will also develop some gross motor skills in gymnastics. We will be focusing on rolling, balancing and landing. They will then continue to practise their running technique in a variety of games and relays. They will be working with skipping ropes, developing basic skills in turning the rope and forward skipping. Students will also learn some fun and exciting games that involve both hopping and jumping. Throughout the term, students will participate in a range of modified games to apply and practise the skills they have learnt.

Information & Communication Technology (I.C.T.)

The Prep students have made a great start to the year in ICT. Every week more students are able to log into the computer network independently and open several different programs. A number of classes have been using laptops for their ICT lessons and it has been pleasing to see students quickly learning how to care for and manage these devices. During Term 2 the Prep students will continue to develop skills and confidence logging into the network and to use correct terminology when describing what they are doing on the computer. We will also be exploring in more detail the tools in the Kid Pix drawing program, in particular importing a photo and using the drawing tools to create some interesting pictures related to the '**Happy, Healthy Me**' theme.