WELCOME TO PREP AT GIPS!

We hope the children have enjoyed their first days at school and have had many wonderful stories to share about their time in the classroom. It has been great to see how quickly the children have settled into their new classroom surroundings. They have been eager to take part in many different activities and have developed some new friendships along the way.

In this newsletter you will find information regarding your child’s weekly timetable, upcoming events at GIPS and a brief overview of our classroom focus for the coming term.

During the beginning of Term One, Prep children will spend the majority of their playtimes in a designated Prep play area, incorporating playground equipment and sandpit. This allows children the time to get used to their new surroundings and feel comfortable in the yard. For those students wishing to explore the wider school area, there will be opportunities to visit the oval and other play spaces under supervision from the Prep Teachers to ensure they remain safe and comfortable. In addition to staff on yard duty, the children will be supervised by us, the Prep Teachers. This will provide children with a familiar face in the yard. Please be aware that children are not to play on the Grade 1/2 playground during or after school.

A FEW REMINDERS:

**Classroom Visits:**
The Prep Classroom Visits are already underway. Children enjoy the chance to have some one-on-one time with their class teacher whilst providing us with valuable information regarding each child’s learning needs. If you are yet to make an appointment time, please see the relevant information on the Prep noticeboard.

**Me Bags:**
Starting in Week 4, each class will begin our ‘Me Bag’ presentations. A note with all the details is included in today’s notice folder. Each week, one child will be selected per grade. This will continue throughout Semester One. You can assist by helping your child select items they can easily talk about in front of others. All items will remain at school for the entire week and will be returned on the Friday.

**Notice Folders:**
Please ensure that all notice folders are returned to school promptly to assist with Wednesday’s notice distribution.

**Sun Smart & Safety:**
Remember that hats need to be worn from all of Term One and if you ride your scooter to school, please wear a helmet!

**Timetable**

**Monday:** Library, ICT Lab, Buddies (fortnightly)

**Tuesday:**

**Wednesday:**

**Thursday:** Visual Arts, Physical Education

**Friday:** Performing Arts, French, icy-poles, Assembly (fortnightly)

**Grade 6 Buddies:**
In the coming weeks, children will be introduced to their Grade 6 Buddy. The children always love getting to know their new ‘big’ friend. This also provides another outlet of support during outside play.

**Information Evening and Parent/Teacher Interviews:**
‘Meet the Teacher Interviews’ will be held on Monday 17 February. These interviews are a chance for parents to share any information they feel is valuable in regard to their child’s transition to school and learning needs. We will be holding a Prep Information evening on Wednesday 26 February. This will be one of the many upcoming events providing information regarding both Prep and school routines. Information regarding these events will be sent home shortly. However, if there is anything you would like to discuss at any time throughout the school year, please do not hesitate to contact your child’s class teacher to make an appointment time.
PREP CURRICULUM

Term One is a very busy time in Prep. Whilst we spend a lot of time developing classroom routines and expectations, we are also busy developing young learners. Read on to find out some of the things we will be doing during the term.

Literacy
During Term One, children will further develop their oral language through Developmental Play, rhymes, songs and class presentations. We will explore books and begin to look at strategies for reading. We will further develop the children’s understanding of the alphabet with sound/letter relationships. Take Home Reading will begin when students start full weeks of school in March. Children will be encouraged to share their thinking through writing and recording ideas. We will introduce correct letter formation and pencil grip and begin to discuss strategies for spelling.

Numeracy
We will begin Term One by looking at basic number concepts. There will be a strong focus on counting small groups of objects accurately and reading and recording the numbers to ten. Children will also explore shape and look at different forms of measurement. Numeracy activities are very hands-on and children will be encouraged to use a range of different materials to build their understandings.

Integrated Studies
We will begin the year with the topics ‘Launch into Learning’ and ‘It’s All About Me’. Children will explore their school surroundings and the people that make up our school community. They will build on understandings of how we change over time, the role of family and how we can keep safe and happy. We will also have an in-school visit from Responsible Pet Ownership as part of our classroom program.

Library
Children will attend weekly Library sessions with their class teacher. They will have the opportunity to borrow from the Library each week. Today, each child has been supplied with a Library Bag. Please empty the contents then return to school. Each week, help your child remember to pack their Library Bag in their school bag and return it to school on, or prior to, their Library day, Monday.

Information Communication Technology (ICT)
The children will have lots of experiences with ICT during their Prep year. In addition to laptop use, iPads and Interactive Whiteboards in the classroom, children have weekly sessions in the Computer Lab with one-to-one laptops. Our focus will be on sensible use of ICT and we will begin to teach the children how to log on and navigate their way around the school network, using basic programs such as Kid Pix and 2Simple.

IMPORTANT DATES:

February
11th - Prep BBQ 6pm-7pm
17th - Meet the Teacher Interviews
17th - School Photos
26th - Parent Information Evening

March
10th - Labour Day Public Holiday
20th - Responsible Pet Ownership
21st - Special furry class visitor

April
4th - Term One ends 2.30pm finish
22nd - Term Two starts
25th - ANZAC Day Public Holiday

Specialists Program:
In 2014 we have the opportunity to mix students up across classes when they attend their specialist sessions. Students have been placed into one of two groups – Gold or Purple. This will help strengthen relationships of students between classes whilst allowing our specialist program to run at its full potential.

Physical Education
Children will attend weekly PE sessions with Miss Williams. Children will need to wear shoes suitable for physical activity and remember their hats and drink bottles.

Performing Arts
The Prep children will enjoy their introduction to the school Performing Arts program with Mrs Crowley. Children will have Performing Arts sessions once a week throughout the year exploring dance, drama and music.

Visual Arts
Children will be getting very creative in Art with Mrs Freeland-Small. Your child’s art smock will be kept at school during the school year. If you haven’t already, please bring an art smock to your child’s classroom.

French
The Prep children will be introduced to the French language starting with general greetings, colours and numbers. Children will have the opportunity to speak, write and draw during weekly sessions with Madame Barre.