Dear Year 4 Parents/ Guardians,

What a great start to the school year we have had! Fifty-seven sun-kissed Year 4’s bounced into 4B, 4TH and 4G ready to start 2014. We are very impressed with the way in which the children are settling into their classes and adapting to the new routines and timetable. Thank you parents for preparing your children so well for the new year and helping them to organise and label all their new books, folders and pencils. The children are delighted to have their own pencil cases and tubs in which to keep all their belongings.

We are planning a busy and full term! In the first couple of weeks we implemented our ‘Launch into Learning’ program which is aimed at setting class agreements to reflect our school values, getting to know one another through activities such as Circle Time and the sharing of the ME Boxes and exploring how best we learn and can work together. The ME boxes have enabled the students to share some special aspects of themselves with their class and teacher as well as practise their speaking and active listening skills.

Last week our Specialist programs began. We hope that you have found a special spot on the fridge or in your child’s bedroom in which to display the Specialist Timetable that was sent home last week. Thank you to those parents who have sent along an art smock for Visual Arts sessions and organised for the children to wear suitable shoes and clothing for physical activity during their Phys. Ed. and Sport days. Please note that information about the optional GIPS sports uniform (Years 3 to 6) will be sent home shortly.

This week we will commence work on our inquiry unit, ‘The First Australians’. This is a Humanities-based topic and will see students inquire into the belief systems, values and cultural features of the first inhabitants of Australia. We endeavour to encourage the students to develop an appreciation and understanding of the first Australians and marvel at their capacity to live in such a diverse climate for so many years. As part of this inquiry, we will be visiting Ceres Environmental Park, in Brunswick East for a day of fun and learning. Further details will follow shortly.

All students in Year 4 have been issued with a personal diary. The students are very excited about their new diary and have been shown how it will be used. Just a reminder that in the case of a child’s absence, parents are required to provide a note stating the reason for absence even though you may have advised us either in person or by a phone call to the Office. The diary is a great avenue for writing the absence note to your teacher.

Home Reading and borrowing from the Library also commenced last week. In readiness, please ensure that your child’s Library Bag has been returned to school. It is an expectation that all children in Year 4 read for at least 20 minutes each night. Students may borrow books from their class library or from home, and are to record their home reading in the personal diary nightly.

We would like to thank those parents who have had the opportunity to come and say hello and visit the classrooms over the last few days or had a quick chat with us in the playground at the end of the day. If you haven’t had the time as yet, don’t worry, as we will be happy to meet you either informally between 3.30 and 3.45pm each day in the playground or more formally at the forthcoming ‘Meet the Teacher’ Interviews, which will be held on Monday 17th February. An online booking sheet was sent home with your child last Friday. We will also be holding a Year 4 Information Night on Wednesday 26th February, however, please remember that if you have any concerns at any time about your child or the program, don’t hesitate to contact us to make an appointment at a mutually convenient time to meet with us.

We look forward to a wonderful term ahead and working with you to give your child a happy and successful year at GIPS in 2014.

Kind regards,

Carrie Butler, Tanya Tomic, Sarah Hunting and Lucy Gargano
Year 4 Teachers