OUR Prep year in a SNAPSHOT

Foundation- Laying the Foundations

• Building a sense of belonging
• Understanding classroom values and practices
  • Making connections
  • Building positive behaviours
• Developing engagement, curiosity and social/emotional wellbeing
• Expressing ideas through a variety of voices and forms
  • Mastering technical skills
• Developing physical capacities and an awareness of their own health needs
Developmental Play during Term 1

Our Developmental Play focuses on assisting the children to separate easily from parents as well as allowing them to collaborate and play with other children, some they know and some that they get to know during this time. The ‘playing time’ assists with building on fundamental skills such as; solving problems using their initiative, listening to other people’s suggestions, taking risks and making mistakes as well as responding to others and making sense of their own learning. Towards the end of Term 1, the selected activities will assist the children in developing specific skills in ‘working as a team member in a group’ and ‘meeting individual needs’. This year, will we also incorporate, ‘Fine Motor’ activities into the play experience. This assists the children in developing their readiness to hold specific writing tools.
Literacy

We hope that you have all purchased a GREEN bag, (see photo opposite). Inside this bag you can place any communication for us. The bag is primarily used for the children to place their ‘Take Home Book’ (Term 2), ‘Reading Diary’ (Term 2), ‘High Frequency Words List’ (Term 2), notices and drawings. We have provided you with a page of some suggested ideas that will help when your child/children begin their formal ‘Take Home Reading Program’. Remembering that the importance of the book is to read for meaning not just reading the words on the page without understanding what they have read. It is important to also note that the book that your child brings home is called a ‘Take Home Book’; your child is the ‘Reader’. Our ‘Take Home Books’ are selected levelled books that have sight words in the text that your child will be learning or are exposed to and they are heavily supported with picture detail. We will send home a suggestion page about ‘Helping your child READ at home’, with their diary. There are some great strategies that we encourage all parents and carers to use.

ORAL LANGUAGE

As mentioned above, in Term 2 when your child brings home a ‘Take Home Book’ you may find that SOME children will also bring home a set of coloured words. The other children will bring home a set of Alphabet Cards (Upper/Lower case letters) to practice letter names and the sounds of particular letters.

The coloured word lists belong to a program called MIOOW. They form part of the most commonly used sight words in our English language. We call them, ‘MAGIC WORDS’. These word lists consist of the 100 most frequently used words in our spoken and written language or half the words found in the English language. These particular words will be used in various literacy activities and games to promote instant recognition and processing of words. They are divided into colours the 12 Golden words make up ¼ of the words used in reading, Red and Gold words make up 1/3 of the words used in reading, and so forth. You may use your copy of words to play simple games like Memory match, SNAP, what’s the missing word, BINGO, etc..

All children in Prep/Foundation will receive these words but how, when and moving to new sets will be solely based on how well each individual child can identify them in different reading materials, on posters and cards and in their everyday speech and written work. It is also highly important that the words are not memorised or ‘rote learnt’ in a particular order, as we have found that it does not assist the children to see the ‘words’ in different contexts. We encourage you to play lots of games such as ‘Memory’, ‘Snap’ or ‘What’s the missing letter’. We will give you examples of what you can do at home.
SPEAKING and LISTENING
In Level 1, we include a specific lesson on Cued Articulation or the pronunciation of a sound name/letter association in words each week. For example, this week the students will be discussing the letter ‘F’ which makes the sound ‘fee’, this sound is also associated with ‘ph’ like in ‘phone’, ‘philosophy’, ‘fluff’. A particular story book or interactive story will introduce the letter and sound and specific activities will be planned to develop the sound/letter association as well as developing list of words that are associated with the particular sound. Developing the sounds that letters make is where all literal beginnings start. In order to develop reading and writing, one must first learn the sounds that letters make and then work on placing these sounds together.
During the term, the children have been/will be, given an opportunity to present some personal items from home in our ‘Me in the bag’ chat. This is an informal way of presenting personal objects or information to an audience. Later into the year, we will introduce a ‘Question Grid’ that can assist them to describe or discuss specific items and we will be selecting a ‘Student of the Day’, who will have specific tasks or will need to prepare items for discussion with their peers.

WRITING and SPELLING
The crocodile/pinch grip is what is introduced and practiced throughout the year. Remember that there are some children who are still trying to feel comfortable with just holding a pencil in a particular hand. We are working on particular ‘Fine Motor’ tasks during our ‘Developmental Play’ and in ‘FingerGym’ on Wednesday (after testing). These specific activities will develop and strengthen hand and arm use to support or enhance hand manipulation. All children in Prep will be using a ‘pencil grip’ on their grey lead pencil for added support.
Our writing sessions mainly focus on developing their letter/sound relationship and using some of the early ‘High Frequency Words’ as mentioned above. All children are encouraged to make an attempt at creating a piece that conveys a message relating specifically to an experience that happened within the Pod, for example, making popcorn or personal events. The most important aspect of ‘Writing’ is the practice of hearing specific sounds in words. Initially, the child may hear only the beginning and they are encouraged to attempt to write a close approximation of what they hear. Illustrating their work and attempting to ‘read it’ back are all components of a typical session. Later, the children will be asked to ‘stretch out the word’ and note other middle and ending sounds.
Writing and spelling the HF words will become part of your child’s literacy tasks during the ‘Literacy Block’. Not only do they need to automatically recall them in different texts but they also need to learn how to ‘spell’ them.
We have attached two sample ‘letter writing’ sheets. These sheets illustrate the correct script and starting points that is taught to the children. Laminate them and when your child shows interest pull them out as it will help them with directionality and starting in the correct position.
CLASSROOM HELPERS PROGRAM

I’m pleased to let you know that Ashburton Primary School’s is offering a free online Parent Helpers’ Induction Course. This is an excellent overview of what to do when helping with Literacy in the classroom. This now replaces the Classroom Helpers course that the school offered annually. We would encourage everyone to complete prior to classroom help. It takes 60 minutes to complete in one sitting.

Log onto www.crystalliselearning.com/helpers/AshburtonPS with the following details:

Username: parent
Password: Ashburton2016

Learners are able to complete the course on desktops, laptops or tablets, using current versions of all major browsers. However, to ensure you have access to a printer from your device prior to attempting the course, as your certificate is only available for printing from the device you complete the course on. Likewise, depending on your browser settings your progress through the course may not be saved if you exit and re-enter, so you are advised to leave the course open on your device until you have completed it.

Please let us know if you have any feedback as you start using the Parent Helpers’ Induction course online at Ashburton PS!

A different bag is required for Library. It assists the children with distinguishing what goes where and there is no confusion if one is left behind accidentally somewhere. Our suggestion is to use either the complimentary bag that they received after their testing day or if you kept their blue book supply bag. All Preps attend library on Monday. The library book that they borrowed can be kept in a safe place at home for 7 days. It should only come back to school every Monday, so not to confuse the children.
NUMERACY

Numeracy or Mathematics as we know best, is very ‘hands on’ in Foundation. Although concepts are explored and investigated, how each child and what each child knows about a particular concept is also considered. Many children come to school having great number knowledge, orally they can recite numbers and patterns but an area that we focus greatly on is asking them to explain their strategies, ‘how did they get there?’ Similar to Literacy, Numeracy is conducted as a whole, part, whole lesson. The students may begin with a whole class game that introduces or works with prior knowledge, and then children are placed into smaller groups to develop or enhance their understanding. Generally, these groupings are based on common understanding and ability, often changing however, Numeracy leads itself so well to children working in mixed ability groupings also.

Numeracy is organised into 3 key areas;

1. Number and Algebra
2. Statistics and Probability
3. Measurement and Geometry

**NUMBER and ALGEBRA**

This is by far the biggest area where many Prep/Foundation students spend much of their learning time. Discussion about ‘what they did’, ‘how did they get the number’, is very much part of the development along side of the skill.

Students connect number names and numerals with sets of up to 20 elements, estimate the size of these sets, and use counting strategies to solve problems that involve comparing, combining and separating these sets. They match individual objects with counting sequences up to and back from 20. Students order the first 10 elements of a set. They also look at different ways of combining the total of two sets; using the ‘counting on’ strategy as well as looking at ‘counting back’ to make the sets smaller.
*STATISTICS AND PROBABILITY*
Students sort familiar categorical data into sets and use these to answer yes/no questions and make simple true/false statements about the data.

*MEASUREMENT and GEOMETRY*
Students identify measurement attributes in practical situations and compare lengths, masses and capacities of familiar objects. They order events, explain their duration, and match days of the week to familiar events. Students identify simple shapes in their environment and sort shapes by their common and distinctive features. They use simple statements and gestures to describe location.

The children will be introduced to the online program ‘Mathletics’. This program is introduced to the children once they become familiar with a range of concepts or after the 3 areas have been introduced to them extensively. An individual username/password will be sent home to each child shortly. This program is ‘language based’, which means a number of things will need to be read to your child. There is a ‘speaking’ icon, but be mindful that some language may need to be explained. This program will be incorporated into various class tasks during their Numeracy session.

**INTEGRATED UNITS of WORK**
Many of the Integrated Units of Work that the children will work through this year relate to their world, an ever changing world. They explore change in the world around them, including changes that impact on them, such as the weather, and changes they can effect, such as making things move or change shape.

The units are outlined below;

**Term 1- Me and My Family/ Connectedness and Starting School**
**Term 2- Growth and Change in all living things; Humans, Animals and Plants**
**Term 3- Needs and Care of living things**
**Term 4- On the Move. How do living and non-living things move?**
ANAPHYLAXIS AWARENESS

Ashburton P S has a number of students who have allergies that may result in an anaphylactic reaction if they come into contact with certain foods. Anaphylaxis can be a life threatening situation and we seek your cooperation in supporting these families. Please read the Ashburton PS Food usage Guidelines. Talk with your children about not sharing food at school as this can lead to someone eating something they shouldn’t. Please be mindful when preparing snacks and lunch for your child that we have students with the following allergies;

**NUTS**: peanut, pecan, walnut, cashew, pistachio, hazelnut, brazil and pine nuts
**EGG**: raw, whole and meringue
**SEEDS**: mustard, pepita and sunflower
**FRUIT**: Kiwi fruit, pineapple, coconut
**SEAFOOD**: prawns. If you are unsure please talk with your class teacher or Ms Nelson/Ms Gilbert.

SMILE program

SMILE sessions occur after assembly on every Monday morning, starting on Monday February 29th for the Prep level. The focus this year is on understanding self-responsibility. SMILE sessions will be delivered weekly, by class teachers to their own group of students. The content will be the same across the school each week, but will be tailored to the developmental level of each group of students. Parents will receive weekly updates in the newsletter under the SMILE news section.

The Prep to Year 6 multi-age grouping will meet three times a year to complete an activity based on what they have learnt. For example, the students will learn about bucket filling in their class groups for and then meet with their multi-age SMILE group to make an origami bucket. This will allow us to tailor content in a more meaningful and authentic manner, but also continue to build relationships across year levels to promote a sense of community.

2016 will be The Year of Responsibility at Ashburton Primary School.
A few reminders:

PUNCTUALITY
- Supervision in the yard begins at 8:45am, children arriving at school prior to this should be accompanied by an adult.
- We are establishing routines within the Pod regarding music (line up) and bells (learning begins) and would greatly appreciate your support by assist your child to line up in the morning in their designated spaces (Prep MC and MG on their decks) (Prep CW and MD on the brick walls). We will walk in as a group.
- If you are late, to school it is important that the children are signed in at the office and office staff will give you a late pass. The late pass goes with your child/children to the class.
- It is important that there is a teacher in the room when you arrive in the morning. Please understand that sometimes teachers have meetings and collegial discussions in the morning. We ask that the children do not enter without a teacher present.

INDEPENDENCE
We are working on developing specific skills that encourage the following behaviours and would greatly appreciate your support with;

- Getting your child/children to carry their bag into the classroom.
- Children checking their own pockets.
- Practice opening and closing of bags, green Communication Bags, snap lock bags, lunch boxes and tops of water bottles.
- Recognising their names on labels.
- Packing up their toys and equipment at home.

ICY POLE FRIDAY
Every Friday before the Fair, children will be able to purchase a $1 icy pole. Could you please show your child/children where their money is kept in their bag as is stops the tears when they don’t see it instantly.

ART SMOCKS
Miss Weston has asked that each child have an Art smock for their class. If you have not provided one yet, please do so as soon as possible. They will be stored in the classrooms and the children will wear them to each class.
BIRTHDAYS

We love to celebrate this special day with your child and if you are planning on bringing in a treat for your child to share with classmates, could you please speak with your class teacher prior to the occasion and also look at our school’s ‘Food Usage Guidelines’ on the school website. We have a number of children with allergies to various products which will need to be communicated.

LUNCH ORDERS AND CLASSROOM CUISINE

The school provides two alternative options for lunch from outside suppliers. The Lunch Order is from the local Milk bar and they offer some ‘hot food’ such as hot dogs or pies. Classroom Cuisine is an online ordering system. Both get delivered to school before lunch. They both arrive in a brown paper bag. It would be great if you could help your child to understand the difference by stating ‘lunch from the milk bar’ or ‘lunch ordered on computer’ or use the words ‘Classroom Cuisine’. We have a PREP POD plastic storage container for lunch orders for the milk bar. We would like the children to place their order into the storage box when they arrive.