Term 1, 2013

Dear Parents,
Welcome to another new and exciting year. Each term we will send home our newsletter to keep you informed of the special activities and events relevant to the Junior School.

Junior School Staff
Jacinta Moyes Jr-Mo
Ben Burch Jr-BB
David Slater Jr-S
Jacinta Mackenzie Jr-Ma
Paul Brock Jr-PB
Melissa den Elzen Jr-D
Deb Letson - Support

Specialist Curriculum
Visual arts Claudia Michielin
Music Kathryn Lane
Physical Education Noreen McMenaman

Rotations
ICT Jacinta Mackenzie/Paul Brock
Library Jacinta Moyes/Melissa den Elzen
Environment/Studies of Asia Ben Burch/David Slater

Junior School
Successful learners at this level begin to organise ideas, use language to work with peers and master basic literacy and numeracy skills. They develop an awareness of other groups, cultures and times. The Junior School spans two years and caters for the learning outcomes required of children by the conclusion of Year 2. There are developmental stages for Numeracy and Literacy that are observed in reading, writing, speaking, listening and mathematics. Personal and Social Learning is fostered throughout the day in all areas of the curriculum. Our children learn in a supportive environment to develop skills to enable them to behave appropriately in a range of social situations and to be able to work together in teams. They learn to share resources fairly and stay on task to complete structured activities within set time frames.

Term 1 Theme
Learning to learn
• About myself
• My family
• Independence
• How I learn best
• Manners
• Routines
• Feelings
• Being a good friend

Literacy
In the Junior School Literacy encompasses reading, writing and speaking and listening.

Reading
A typical ‘guided reading’ session will involve a teacher directed group being supported through a text. The group will be explicitly taught reading strategies and comprehension skills such as prediction, finding literally stated information, understanding the inferred meaning, applying their knowledge, making connections and understanding the author’s intent.

During this time, the other children in the class will be working on the ‘Daily Five’:
Reading to self
Reading to others
Listening to Reading
Work on Writing
Word Work
to enhance and further develop reading, spelling and writing skills.
As part of the reading program the students will be explicitly taught skills from the ‘Literacy CAFÉ Menu’:

- **Comprehension**—I understand what I read
- **Accuracy**—I can read the words
- **Fluency**—I can read accurately, with expression and understand what I read
- **Expand Vocabulary**—I know, find and use interesting words.

We refer you to the Reading Log and the valuable support information it contains and ask that you complete this daily record of your child’s reading.

At home you can further support your child’s reading by helping them learn the common sight words. (See attached ‘Take Home Book’ notice)

During writing sessions children will be introduced to a variety of text types: including recounts, narratives, procedural texts, information reports and persuasive writing.

They will also be involved in handwriting lessons designed to teach correct letter formation, size, slope and correct pencil grip. All children are required to write using Vic. Modern Cursive.

**Take Home Readers:**

As you are aware your child will be bringing home a book each night to read to or with you and to be documented in their reading logbooks. These books are levelled.

Students are assessed on their reading ability regularly by the classroom teacher.

The purpose of reading at home is to develop confidence, fluency and an enjoyment of reading. Therefore, the books being brought home should be easy for your child to read. Usually these books are 1-2 levels below the level where your child is reading.

Feel free to extend and expand the love of reading by reading library books (picture story books) with your child and visiting the local library.

**Speaking and Listening**

Speaking and listening is a vital part of Literacy and is embedded into everything we do: presenting during I.L., sharing items of personal interest to the class, listening to a story or working in a group.

**Numeracy**

During term 1, children in the Junior Level will be participating in a wide variety of activities in the following curriculum areas of:

- **Number** – Exploring numbers to 99; counting by 1’s, 2’s, 5’s and 10’s forwards and backwards; odds/evens, ordering from smallest to largest and largest to smallest; numbers before and after; addition and subtraction strategies and place value – grouping in tens and ones.
- **Space** – 2D and 3D shapes, location e.g. maps and simple directions.
- **Measurement, Chance and Data** – Measuring using informal and formal units of length and time. Classifying chance events. Collecting and displaying data in simple graphs.
- **Working mathematically** – Applying mathematical skills, language and symbols to describe and solve everyday problems.

We will be using a hands-on, real life approach to teaching strategies and skills in these curriculum areas. Children will be encouraged to respond to open-ended questions and tasks that allow them to build on their prior knowledge and to extend their current understandings at their individual level.

**Investigative Learning**

Investigative Learning will be undertaken in all Junior School classrooms. The children will continue to actively explore, investigate and create projects based on a variety of subjects that are of interest to them. We use a wide range of materials during our investigations and appreciate donations of: small cardboard boxes, clean lids, wool, beads, buttons, magazines and anything that could be used for costumes.
If you have something that you think might be useful don’t hesitate to speak to any one of the Junior School teachers.

**Specialists- Art, Music, PE**

Some classes will attend specialists in the last session of the day. In most cases these classes will take their school bags to the class and be dismissed from there. Eg the art room, music room or the gym.

Please ensure you children have an art smock and stadium shoes in their classroom.

**School Times**

It has been great to see all the children at school on time ready for the 9.00am bell. We do have a concern for those few children who are here on their own too early, as yard supervision begins at 8.45am. A ‘before and after school care program’ is available for those who need care beyond regular school hours.

If your child arrives after 9.00am you will need to sign them in at the office and collect a ‘late arrival’ slip. For early departures you also need to sign the departure book and collect a slip before collecting your child from their classroom. These slips need to be given to your child’s teacher.

**Daily Routines for School**

We know that children who have an established regular routine manage school life with ease. Now is a good time to reinforce this including the sensible time for going to bed and the need for a good start to the day. A morning routine that allows time for a good breakfast, limited TV, if at all, and a walk or drive to school with plenty of time so there is no anxiety linked to being late and forgetting things.

Please encourage your child to be responsible for packing their own bag with their satchel (plus take home book), lunch box, drink bottle and brain food. Prompting may be necessary but we are trying to develop independence and ownership through routines.

So that valuable teaching and learning time can begin promptly at the start of the day, could you please ensure that your child has been to the toilet prior to entering the classroom at the start of the day.

**Notes for absences**

If your child is away could you send a note on the day they return so each teacher can enter this information on the attendance roll. If you have planned a holiday let the teacher know in advance when your child will not be attending school. Please remember that even if you have discussed an absence with your child’s teacher we still require a written note.

Please use the absence note pad. They are available at the office if you don’t have one.

**Homework**

Homework for the Junior School consists of daily reading of ‘Take Home’ books to a supportive adult and practising their common sight words. Homework should take no more than 30 minutes per night.

Please encourage your child to establish a routine for reading each day. Please sit beside them and monitor what they are reading and get your child to check that it makes sense. This may be at night or in the morning. Children who regularly practise reading in a supportive environment improve their skills and develop a healthy attitude towards reading.

It is important to include some discussion about the book. The children in this level will not only be concentrating on reading skills and word knowledge, but also a further emphasis will begin on comprehension.

Also enjoy the library books your child borrows. It is ok for you to still be reading your child picture storybooks as this provides a good model for them.

**Student Behaviour**

To ensure a positive and productive learning environment for all our children, we have developed Class Behaviour Agreements for each class of which you will have received a copy. The student behaviour code for outdoor play has been discussed and you can find a copy on the school website.

Please discuss these with your child to ensure that you encourage them to understand and manage their behaviour and that you want them to be safe and be able to achieve their best at school.
Rubbish Free Lunch
Having a rubbish free lunch is a great way to reduce our waste usage and also educate the children on how to be more environmentally friendly. It has been great to see children with fruit and other goodies in reusable containers and the very small amount of waste at the end of eating times. Remember Monday is our Rubbish Free Lunch day and we're all aiming to reduce our waste and see if we can be completely rubbish free.

Pride Areas
Friday is school pride day. Each class is allocated a particular area to look after. It has been fantastic to see the Junior School classes keeping their areas looking neat and tidy.

Communication and Reporting
An Information Evening for parents will be held on Wednesday 20th February.

Reports are sent home in June and December and Parent/Teacher conferences take place in June.

We value parent/teacher communication and believe that it is a vital part of education. If at any time you have a concern or need to discuss something feel free to contact your child’s classroom teacher but please let he/she know in advance so that adequate time can be scheduled when they are not teaching, attending meetings or participating in Professional Development outside of school. It is preferable for you to write a note or send an email to the class teacher to arrange a mutually convenient time. Attached is our school ‘Parent Concerns and Complaints Policy’.

Parent Representative for class
A notice about this will go home soon.

School Family Fair
Our Fair is a fantastic way to support the fundraising efforts at our school. We are in desperate need of some parents to volunteer some time to help out on some of the stalls. Please come and see us if you can support your school for even just a small amount of time. It will be much appreciated by everyone.

Uniform /Hats
Please remember that as we are a Sunsmart school, hats are to be worn between September 1st and May 1st, which will take us into Term 2 this year. We would like all children in suitable sport shoes and sports uniform for Phys Ed and Platoon. If there is a need for your child to be out of uniform on any given day please send a note to your child’s class teacher. The school’s uniform policy is available to parents on request.

Head Lice
Please check your child’s hair regularly as unfortunately head lice is always a possibility. If your child has long hair it is best to keep it tied back. Please let us know if your child has been treated for head lice so we can let others know.

Circles
Will take place fortnightly on Mondays from 1:50-2:40.

Rationale for Circles
• To develop relationships within the school community.
• To support the development of values.
• To create a sense of engagement and belonging.
• To improve student attitudes to school and their peers.
DATES TO REMEMBER
School Photos: Thursday 21st February
Parent Information Evening: Wednesday 20th February
First Indoor Assembly: 25th February
Buddies 2 Production: Wednesday 27th February 12.00-1.00
Labour Day Holiday: Monday 11th March
School Fair: Saturday 23rd March
Term 1 Ends: Thursday 28th March 2.30 pm

The Junior School Team:
Ben – burch.ben.b@edumail.vic.gov.au
David – slater.david.p@edumail.vic.gov.au
Jacinta Mo – moyes.jacinta.p@edumail.vic.gov.au
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MULTI AGE CLASSES

At Croydon Hills Primary we use multi age classes from years one to six. Multi age classes have been around since formal schooling started. They are a fact of life in rural schools and many small and large metropolitan schools have operated multi ages successfully for many years. Good classrooms are not determined by whether it is a multi age or not. It is determined by the quality of the teacher, the classroom dynamics and individual student needs being met.

The continuous nature of learning was formally recognised in Victoria in 1979, when the term ‘grades’ was replaced by ‘years’ to denote a child’s progress through our school system. The notion of ‘grades’ and ‘grading’ still persists especially in primary school settings and is often embedded in the ‘psyche’ of the local community.

The key to appreciating the benefits of multi age classes is in understanding that growth is determined in stages and not by ages. Ironically, every class is already a multi age in terms of the range in school starting ages and the different academic abilities of the students. The emphasis is on the progression of the individual through logical stages of learning not just ages. In every class – including multi age classes – students are assessed to ascertain their current level of learning. The teacher will then design and implement a program that caters for all students’ needs, while keeping in mind that content in the stage or stages must be taught.

A ‘multi-age’ philosophy places the learner at the centre of the considerations of curriculum and classroom practice. Children are supported to develop at their own rate without regard for ‘grade’ expectations.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE ADVANTAGES OF MULTI AGE CLASSES?

- Younger children can benefit from role models of older students in the classroom
- It can raise the self-esteem of less confident older children
- Our classes can become more balanced and fairer as there are far more options to place students in classes
RAISING A CONCERN OR COMPLAINT

A parent / guardian can raise concerns or complaints about any aspect of the school’s operations.

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<th>ABOUT WHAT/ISSUE</th>
<th>WHO TO CONTACT</th>
<th>HOW</th>
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| Classroom activities, class curriculum, Friendship issues | Your child’s Class Teacher or Appropriate Specialist Teacher | Telephone, email  
| | | Arrange an appointment |
| Complex student issues, Student Welfare, School Curriculum, Staff Members | Assistant Principal, Carol Wyatt | In writing by hand, email or mail  
| | | Telephone to arrange an appointment |
| School Policy, School Management | Principal, Graeme Caudry | In writing by hand, email or mail  
| | | Telephone to arrange an appointment |
| School Fees & payments | Office Staff | Telephone, in person |
| General enquiries | | |

PLEASE ...

• Raise your concern as soon as you can after the issue occurs
• Put it in writing, providing detailed factual information
• Maintain and respect everyone’s privacy and confidentiality
• Be calm, courteous, honest and sincere

PLEASE ALSO ...

• Recognise everyone has rights and responsibilities that must be balanced
• Respect and understand each other’s point of view; value difference rather than judge and blame
• Realise we need to achieve an outcome acceptable to everyone involved

ADDRESSING COMPLAINTS ...

Our response will be prompt, courteous, efficient and fair.

We will follow the process outlined below:

• Acknowledge your complaint by telephone, email or mail and let you know how long it will take to investigate
• (if appropriate) record details in the school’s register of complaints
• Give you a copy of the CHPS Parent Concerns & Complaints Policy
• Investigate and provide a response as soon as possible
• Make every effort to resolve your complaint within 20 school days

REMEDIES ...

When a complaint is justified, the school will work with you to find an appropriate remedy such as:

• An explanation or further information
• Mediation, counselling or other support
• An apology, expression of regret or admission of fault
• Change a decision
• Change policies, procedures or practices
• Cancel a debt (such as for school payments)
• Refund a fee

The school will implement the remedy as soon as it can. If the remedy is ongoing, the school will try and keep you up to date with progress.