**Important upcoming dates:**
- **12th March:** Labour Day Holiday
- **13th March:** Incursion: Marvellous Me!
- **Wednesday 14th March:** Preps begin full time
- **15th March:** Incursion: The Friend Ship
- **14th & 15th March:** Parent Teacher Interviews
- **25th May:** School photos (amended date)

**Thank-you**
We extend our thanks to the wonderful parents who helped cook pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. The students had a lovely time helping to measure, mix and observe the pancakes bubble as they cooked...not to mention devouring them!
The whole Prep Level was immersed in ‘p’ themed activities for the week; making pancakes and a pancake book, reading Pinocchio, decorating a peacock, making a paper pizza and a pet puppet and in maths we made many patterns and two pictographs displaying our favourite toppings and lunchbox contents.
Thanks again for your assistance.

**Assessment**
The allocated assessment time is now complete. The Prep team are currently preparing an ILP (Individualised Learning Plan) for your child, which they will share with you at the Parent Teacher Nights this week.

A reminder that the Preps commence on Wednesdays as of THIS WEEK, and will be full time. Be mindful that operating for 5 consecutive days may come as a shock for some children, so make sure there’s plenty of early nights and some quiet activities for weekends.

**Lost Property**
With the cooler mornings and warmer afternoons, we are finding a number of students are misplacing their jumpers. We ask parents to please check the names on your children’s uniform, to ensure that it is labelled and that it belongs to you. Sometimes the children may inadvertently pick up and pack up another student’s jumper at the end of the day.

If you have lost an item, the lost property is located in wheely tubs underneath the stairs in at the Prep end of the building.

**Egg carton call out**
As part of our Numeracy lessons, where we are introducing number, the students are exploring Eric Carle’s colourful picture story book ‘The Very Hungry Caterpillar.’ You may have heard your child singing the days of the week (to the tunes of the Adam’s Family or Clementine). We are using the story as a starting point to count, write and order numbers to ten, as well as exploring different ways to make ten and to subitise (recognise small collections of items without the need for counting).

For a creative activity, we would like to make some caterpillars and butterflies to further decorate the learning zones. If you have any egg cartons that you are happy to donate, please send these to school with your child. It doesn’t matter if it is a half or whole dozen container.

Thanks!

**Buddies**
The ‘Buddies’ program has started much to the Prep and Grade 5’s delight! The students have shared three lunches together and look forward to completing various activities together throughout the year.

**News Circles**
All grades share with their small News Circle groups on Mondays. The students are encouraged to bring one, small, non-precious item to share in their group. Some students may like to simply share a story or joke with their group.

**Entry door**
The Preps will continue to enter via the Southern Playground door, unless it is raining. In this case, the door adjoining the wet area will be used.
Take home books

The students started the routine of ‘take home books’ from day one. It is a joy to watch their excitement and enthusiasm when ‘reading’ each other their books. We refer to them as ‘take home books’ as they are the reader, not the book!

At this stage, most of the children are taking home books from the same level box. Further assessment, using ‘running records,’ will determine when children will change book boxes. The repetitive text structures help children gain confidence and become familiar with high frequency words.

Outlined below are a few tips for at home reading:

- Set up a routine for reading time; right before bed is not always best
- Ask your child to flick through the book first and make predictions about characters or events
- Use the words ‘title, author, front cover, illustrations, letter, word…’
- Read the book to your child as they point (track) the words – you may need to guide their finger initially
- Encourage your child to read the book, while tracking with their finger
- Follow up each book with a short activity such as: look for words with one letter, two letters, find the longest word, ask your child to match a word that you write down to the print in their book; hunt for a specific letter.
- Make sure you model sounding out words, using the sounds not the letter names.

Only record take home books in your child’s yellow log book.

Writing

The students focus on one letter each week and help make word lists containing that letter, as well as reading Big Books loaded with the target letter. We focus on the sound the letter makes. They also practise the correct letter formation for both upper and lower case letters. We use the word ‘start point,’ so they know where to start the letter and ‘upstroke’ or ‘downstroke’ to indicate direction.

Over the coming days, you may notice a laminated copy of your child’s name. This is for them to keep. We are keen for them to practise the correct letter formation and casing in their name. A normal texta can be used to trace these letters before using a pencil to copy onto paper. Observe their pencil grip and offer them some assistance as necessary with attention to start points and directionality.

Numeracy

As mentioned earlier in this Prattle, we are working on number, number formation and days of the week.

Supporting maths development is best done in an incidental way; that is, as situations arise. You may find that you can include your child in cooking by asking them to measure or count the ingredients; by setting the table– getting the correct amount of cutlery out; by writing numbers in flour on the bench top as you cook. You may like to practise counting during pack up time at home by counting the items as they go into the toy box; use counting back from 20 as an indicator that time is running out for something (e.g. I’ll count back from 20 then pull the bath plug out).

You may like to set up a mini calendar or schedule to reinforce events for the days of the week.

Mix it up chef...

Yum, Pancakes!