10th February 2017

Dear Prep Parents,

Welcome to the Prep Year. We hope you all had a fantastic Christmas, New Year and took a final breath on Australia Day before it was time to begin the busyness of school life.

This year we welcome four new teachers to the Prep team, Miss Philly Tarlinton (Prep Yellow), Ms Bree Carratello (Prep Red), Mrs Katie Edgar (Prep Blue), and Mrs Janine Boer (Prep Green).

Green Pouch and School Correspondence:
Parents, all Prep students should have received a green pouch. If you have not received one please see your teacher. This green pouch needs to be brought to school everyday, and will be the main way information gets to and from school on a daily basis. It will contain the children’s daily homework (Reading Log book, Sight Word Sheet and Homework book (Spelling and Maths)). Additionally, all correspondence from the school, except Weekly Newsletters will be placed in here. Weekly Newsletters are emailed to you, so ensure you update your email or collect a hard copy from the Office, or Log onto the school website. So please make time to check the Green Pouch daily.

Uniform:
Students will be expected to be in full summer uniform, and on their allocated sports day they will be expected to wear their summer sports uniform. All this is set out in the School Student Handbook. School uniform includes appropriate socks (brown for boys and white for girls) and black school shoes or black only runners (without brands or labels in different colours). Normal sports runners are permitted on your child’s allocated sports day. School uniform includes the appropriate coloured hair ties and clips (brown, white, yellow & black)-no colours (pink, purple etc), and the only jewellery that is allowed to be worn is a simple pair of studs or sleepers for earrings, a cross necklace and a watch. Also please ensure all hair is tied up or clipped back from the face. This also may assist with keeping lice at bay.

Hats, Hats, Hats….Hats are compulsory for Terms 1 and 4. All students must wear a hat at school. If students don’t have a hat they will be asked to sit in the designated shaded area for the duration of recess or lunch.

Parent Helpers:
Parents who wish to assist in the school, must have a current and valid Working With Children's Check, and have completed the school based training program. Information about the up and coming school based training program will be in the, ‘Contact’, the school’s weekly newsletter, so watch out for this if you are interested. Once classroom routines and children have settled in, we will invite you to be part of our learning in the classroom.
Please:
Please remember that work begins at 8.45 (the first bell), and we appreciate your prompt departure from the classroom in the morning which allows all children to settle into routines quickly.

School Lunch/Snack:
We endeavour to exclude as many allergy based items (nuts, eggs etc) from Prep especially, as their are many children suffering severe allergies. So in order to protect the health of students with allergies we would appreciate that all parents are careful when preparing their child’s food for the day. Additionally, we ask that you check your child’s lunch box each day. We encourage children to eat their fruit, vegetables, cheese, sandwich, wrap, dry biscuits, etc before any of their other food. We suggest that you limit ‘treats’ to one per day. You will also notice that lunch wrappers will be sent home in children’s lunch box as our school is endeavouring to move into, ‘Nude Food’ (food is brought to school in reusable containers). Children are only allowed water in their drink bottles. Check the ‘Contact’ for Canteen information.

Brain Food:
Brain food is a small healthy snack that children eat before Recess usually between 9.30-10.00 during learning time. We encourage you to provide bite sized manageable pieces of food, such as grapes, apples, carrot/celery/cucumber sticks etc that are not sticky and messy to eat.

Birthday Celebrations:
Furthermore, we know students like to celebrate their birthdays at school with something to share with the class. The best option is individually wrapped lollies, like lollypops, as these are less likely to contain elements of nuts or other ingredients children may be allergic to and can be placed into students’ bags to go home to be enjoyed. If you have any queries please see your child’s teacher.

School Absence:
If your child is absent from school, you must inform the school of your child’s absence, either through the School App, or a written letter to the teacher as this letter is documented and filed as it is a legal requirement.

Cybersafety and Behaviour document:
You will find attached a Cybersafety User Agreement form. This needs to be returned before your child is allowed access to the computer and iPads. Furthermore you need to read the St. Simon’s Positive Behaviour document with your child and then fill it in and return it to your teacher (this is attached to the back of this letter).

Mathematics Testing:
1 to 1 student and teacher testing is on the next 3 Wednesday. Ensure you have filled in the timetable allocation sheet. This is necessary for all students. If you have not done so please see your child’s teacher.

Medication:
If your child takes medication of any form whether regularly or when needed, you must advise the Administration team and the child’s teacher in writing. If your child requires the administration of medication whilst at school a relevant form must be completed, along with the
medication and given the the Administration team. Please note that no painkillers can be administered to children by the school. Ideally if you child is unwell we ask that you keep them at home as sickness in junior school spreads very quickly to other children and teaching staff.

Head Lice:
If your child is found with head lice you will be contacted to come and collect your child and carry out the required treatment. It is vital you complete treatment thoroughly before returning your child to school. The best way to monitor this is to ensure you check your child’s hair regularly, especially during an outbreak, and use as many preventive measures as possible.

Toys/Valuables:
The policy at St. Simon’s is that children do not bring toys or precious items to school. This is so children do not get upset if the item is lost or damaged. In Term 2 we will begin Show and Tell and children may be able to bring special items to share.

School Stationery/Supplies:
You may have received a letter/email home stating some stationery items that you have not returned to school. It is imperative that ALL your child’s stationery items are brought to school as soon as possible. If you are having some issues with this please see your child’s teacher.

School Nurse:
A School Nurse will attend the school early on in the year. As the time approaches, parents will receive further information along with consent forms. If, however, your child’s class teacher or you as their parents have concerns you would like to address prior to these visits, it is imperative that these discussions occur with the relevant parties sooner rather than later. The upcoming parent/teacher chats might be the place to start.

Term 1 Additional Prep Activities:
The Prep Prayer Night will take place on the 21st February. The Prep teachers look forward to sharing this night of reflection with their Prep students and their families. The evening is held in the Parish Church. The orange notice (sent home at the beginning of the week) needs to be filled in and returned as soon as possible. Additionally, there is the Prep Sports Nights on Thursday the 30th of March. In recent years it has been quite a social event for our families. More details as the time approaches.

Parent Teacher Chat times will be held on Monday 13th and Thursday 16th February. This is a short 15 min time for you to impart any additional information about your child to the classroom teacher. We note that these times are strictly adhered to. If you feel you would like a longer time with your child’s teacher please see them at a time before or after school to make an appointment at a different time.

Play Area:
Prep children have a designated playground which has plenty of shade. Prep teachers supervise the students and release each other to ensure that there is generally a Prep teacher on duty for the children to approach when necessary.
Spare Clothes:
Please don’t forget to pack a change of clothes, especially underwear and socks in the bottom of your child’s bag. Additionally, Prep teachers have purchased sets of new underwear. If your child for any reason needs a dry pair of underwear and they do not have any in their bag, they will be given a brand new pair to wear. In return you are to purchase a new pair of underwear and send it to school to replace the one’s used by your child.

Reading and Oral Conversations:
We ask you to either continue or begin to establish a reading routine with your child each day. As this will assist them with their own reading, when they begin to bring home take home books to read. Oral conversations with your child are very important and this helps them link these experiences when they are learning to read and think about what they are reading about.

Assembly/Awards/Birthdays/Liturgies:
The Prep’s will gather fortnightly to share in a Prep Assembly. Whole School Assemblies are held monthly (see the ‘Contact’ for more details), additionally each class will present a School Liturgy (details for these will come as time draws closer and will be in the ‘Contact’). At Prep Assembly we will celebrate student birthdays. They will receive a special certificate and small gift. There will also be other Awards for various items. We will also share any news or go over any other necessary items.

During Term 1 we will be covering the following units of work:
In Religion we will begin the term with the topic of Prayer. This will focus on the prayer space and the objects we find in it. It will also include learning how to make the Sign of the Cross and learning the St Simon School Prayer. This will be followed by Lent and Holy Week, where students will explore the Easter Story with an emphasis on the story of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection. The first Integrated Studies Unit will be based around starting school with a focus on school rules, friendship, using our manners and the school environment. This will be followed by a unit based on the topic of Australia.

In Mathematics we will be covering the topics of Data, followed by Number and Place Value. This will include teaching the students activities that will come home in the student’s ‘Math Toolkits’ to be practised at home (later on in the term). These activities generally support what students are learning at the time.

In Literacy, the focus will be on learning the sounds of letters, with an emphasis on how children’s mouths and tongue are positioned to make the sound. This is also supported by a hand sign and a song, which helps remind them on the letter/sound. Children will also receive their first set of sight words (Golden Words) which form part of the homework routine (See home work sheet for how to do this). They will also be immersed in learning to spell words, which links closely to the sounds they are learning and letters they will be taught how to write. Prep teachers plan rich language experiences where children are encouraged to practise communication skills that include using eye contact, waiting for their turn to speak, and listening to the speaker. Additionally, students will be encouraged to use clear and correct speech.
Homework:
Finally, homework for this term will be centred around students weekly spelling revision and revising their Sight Word Posters. Later on in the term we will add a Maths activity which will come home in the ‘Maths Toolkit’ and needs to be returned the followed day. The focus for this will be in line with what students are learning in class. Homework is due on Friday morning. However, we are well aware of time factors in family lives and if you have any concerns about homework please see your child’s classroom teacher (see additional homework sheet for more details-sent home at the beginning of the week)

**Student’s Term 1 Specialist Timetable**

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foundation Green</strong> (Mrs. Janine Boer)</td>
<td>Library</td>
<td>Art</td>
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<td>PE</td>
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<td>Music</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Foundation Blue</strong> (Mrs. Katie Edgar)</td>
<td>Music/Performing Arts</td>
<td>PE</td>
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<td>Art</td>
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<td>Library</td>
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<td><strong>Foundation Yellow</strong> (Miss. Philly Tarlinton)</td>
<td>Art</td>
<td>PE</td>
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<td>Music</td>
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<td>Library</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Foundation Red</strong> (Ms. Brianna Carratello)</td>
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<td>Library</td>
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**Most importantly:** The key to creating an effective home-school relationship is communication. Parents please ensure that if you have any concerns that you speak to or email your classroom teacher. However, if it is a matter that needs greater attention than a few minutes before or after school, it is best to make an appointment with the teacher.

**Teacher emails:**
Janine Boer jboer@ssrowville.catholic.edu.au
Brianna Carratello bcarratello@ssrowville.catholic.edu.au
Philly Tarlinton ptarlinton@ssrowville.catholic.edu.au
Katie Edgar kedgar@ssrowville.catholic.edu.au

We are looking forward to working with you and your children over the year.

Regards

Janine Boer (Prep Green), Katie Edgar (Prep Blue), Philly Tarlinton (Prep Yellow), and Brianna Carratello (Prep Red)