Welcome to the 2015 School Year

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to school. I hope the holidays were both relaxing and enjoyable. Our week one has whizzed by and the students have settled in well and seem very excited about the year ahead. I plan to present them with lots of new challenges that develop their thinking and problem solving skills. I encourage students to move out of their comfort zone, take risks, and learn from mistakes. I’m looking forward to teaching your child and helping them to capitalize on their learning development this year. My teaching philosophy is based around providing an environment where students feel safe to give things a go, build confidence in their own ability and take challenges head on. I look forward to the journey ahead, buckle up!

Following are some of our classroom routines, some will be new to your child. If at anytime you are unsure or have any questions to ask, please don’t hesitate to see me at a time that is convenient.

Class Composition: We have 28 students comprising 14 girls and 14 boys.

WHAT’S ON / WHAT DAY?

P.E. Wednesday 12.15-1pm with Mr Shearer (Sports Uniform to be worn Tuesday and Wednesday + Thursday for first 5 weeks due to Footsteps lessons)
Library Wednesday 1.45-2.15pm with Mrs Grbin (Students will have the opportunity to borrow books in this period)
Japanese Monday 10.00-11.00am with Mrs. Ackland
Recorders Thursday 10.00-11.00am with Kerry Davey
Bank Books Hand in on Tuesday
Lunch Orders: Hand lunch orders in on Thursdays

ORGANISATION

• As your child is entering Year Five, their organisational skills should be at a level where they have the ability to organise themselves – naturally, this is generally supported by regular reminders and guidance!
• We recommend particular strategies to help children, such as:
  - Students use their diary daily to write in homework, reminders, messages and any other important information that they can then pass onto parents.
  - Students to place any newsletters, notes, worksheets and homework into their blue reading folder so things aren’t lost.
  - Students are encouraged to empty their bag when they arrive home and prepare it for the next day, making sure they have everything they need.
• Through undertaking these routine activities children become more organised, resulting in reduced student stress levels.
• At a Year Five level students should be able to enter and leave the classroom on their own in the mornings and afternoons. This will help to create independence, which is an essential skill to have upon attending Secondary School in the years to come.
DIARY
- Your child’s diary is very important. The school diary is a way in which parents and teachers can communicate. Effective use of the diary will assist student organisation and personal responsibility. Your child’s diary will contain a list of the homework tasks that they are required to complete each night. For communication purposes it is important that parents check their child’s diary every night.
- Parents are required to initial completed homework, reading and test results and to support in the effective use of the diary.
- If your child is away, please notify the front office and then follow up with a note for the class teacher the following day, listing the reason for their absence, eg. illness, family reasons, etc.

HOMEWORK
- Students can expect to have 30-45 minutes of homework each night except Fridays (no homework). They are expected to read each night, complete Soundwaves spelling activities, mental maths, practice times tables and sometimes another piece of work (such as unfinished school work, maths worksheet, etc).
- Throughout the year, at different times, students will have assignments and projects to work on. They will need to spend time working on them at home.
- All homework which needs to be completed will be recorded in the children’s diaries.
- If there is a valid reason as to why your child is unable to complete all of their homework, we ask that you write a note in your child’s diary otherwise they will be asked to complete it at recess, lunchtime or during a rethink visit. We believe time management is a skill worth learning.
- Students will hand their diary up on a Friday morning to be checked however if students have a note for the teacher, they are required to place it on the teacher’s table first thing in the morning.

UNIFORM
- Please ensure your child is wearing correct uniform. White socks are to be worn for P.E. and shoes that are predominately white. Boys are to wear grey socks with school uniform.
- Hats must be worn during term 1 & 4 in the yard. No hat, No play. Please ensure all pieces of uniform are clearly labelled.
- Nail polish is not allowed to be worn. Jewellery is to consist of a stud or sleeper earrings, medic alert bracelet, signet ring and necklace of religious significance.
- Hair must be neat, tidy and clean and tied back away from the face. Blue and gold ribbons or clips are to be worn. Please help us by ensuring correct uniform is worn at all times.

TESTS
- Each Friday there will be a spelling and mental math test on the week’s work. Each night children are to learn their spelling words and complete mental math activities. Year 5 students will sit the NAPLAN tests early in Term 2 and will receive ample practice in preparation for them.

Class Behaviour Management
- In week 1 we worked through Rights, Responsibilities, Rules and Consequences for our class, which has been agreed upon by all. This plan is attached for you to read and sign. It is clearly displayed in our room. Rewards are in place for those that make appropriate choices. For those who do not, they will proceed through the consequences.

Yard Behaviour
- Children know the yard rules in our school. Inappropriate language will not be tolerated.
- The Rethink room is operational for those who decide to play unfairly.
- The first week has been excellent and even though the weather has been horrible, everyone has shown good ‘Getting Along’ skills
Class Help

- During the year there will be times when I may ask for offers of help with various activities. At this stage we do not require regular classroom help.

Assessment

3 Way interviews will occur in Term 1
Mid Year Semester report in Term 2
Parent/teacher interviews will be offered in term 3 (these are optional)
Written report in Term 4

TERM ONE CURRICULUM

In English this term we will focus on the Narrative & Exposition genres. Our Class Novel ‘Boy Overboard’ will be a major theme for the term. Book discussion groups will be introduced to cover every detail of the book’s adventures. The students will receive weekly spelling words and activities to complete for homework during the week (these are located in their spelling Soundwaves book). The Grammar & Punctuation focus areas are as follows: Nouns, Adjectives, Verbs, Verb tenses, Pronouns, Capital letters, Full stops, base words, synonyms, antonyms, alphabetical order, plurals, Editing & Proof reading.

Maths will include two major investigations. This includes having a ‘Race around Australia’ [Investigation 1] which covers the areas of 24 hour time, reading and interpreting timetables, Australian time zones, Map reference, Compass points, directions, turns and degrees, coordinates to locate position, latitude and longitude. Investigation 2 is titled ‘Dynamic dominoes’ which covers fractions, equivalent fractions, add and regrouping fractions, subtracting fractions, percentages and percentages using a calculator.

In Religion we look at the Being Human strand and how we are all created in God’s image. We take a close look at Easter, Lent, Holy Week, Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday.

In Science, we look at Earth and its place in Space. We cover Eratosthenes theory that the world is not flat but round, the Sun as the centre of the Solar System, Galileo’s telescopes, the Solar System, planets and beyond. Science will include a lot of hands on activities and developing their knowledge of astronomy.

In History we take a close look at the Australian colonies in the 1800’s. What led the British government to set up colonies in Australia. The Relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the land and the consequences of British invasion for Aboriginal people. We look at the Animals and plants introduced to Australia and the impacted on the Australian environment.

In Civics & Citizenship, students will learn about the Australian Government, the democratic system and the roles of representatives.

In Health we will look at strategies to help promote health, safety and wellbeing. In Program Achieve lessons students will revisit the Catastrophe Scale, Feelings Thermometer and the Blockers. These are the main thing covered in term 1, it’s going to be a great term.

PASSWORDS (for imaths and soundwaves)

Students can access imaths and soundwaves at home. If students want to revisit topics covered in class they can assess them online

www.imathskids.com.au
Password: once242

www.soundwaveskids.com.au
Password: spring611

School Website:
I endeavor to regularly update the class page with what’s going on, upcoming events and any useful information.
http://www.stjoclar.catholic.edu.au/
So far……

The children have:

- Had a 100 word spelling test
- Visited the Library to select books to read
- Written a story about a boy called ‘Eric’
- Read six chapters of our class novel ‘Boy Overboard’
- Answered questions about Boy Overboard
- Extracted key information from the Boy Overboard book
- Read ‘What life is like in Afghanistan’ and answered questions
- Participated in speaking and listening activities
- Completed PATS maths test for Quicksmart assessment
- Worked in groups to discuss our ‘Classroom Agreement’ which is signed by each student and displayed in our room.
- Revisited the 5 Program Achieve keys to success
- Set an individual term goal
- Completed Monday & Friday Mental maths tests
- Revisited Soundwaves and completed Unit 1
- Participated in a visual memory game
- Participated in the first of five dance lessons by Footsteps Dance Company
- Listened to LEAD speeches and voted in new LEAD reps. Congratulations to Ned Ross and Paryss Maunder for being selected as this semesters LEAD reps
- Played ‘Beat the Clock’
- Participated in ‘Proofreading’

DISCUSSIONS WITH THE TEACHER

I am more than happy to discuss any issues or queries you may have. If there are any issues that arise this year that you would like to discuss with me, please come and see me at an appropriate time. I’m available before school (mon-thur) and each night after school (except Wednesdays).

Please note that I aim to set high standards for the students in terms of expectations and also clearly defined boundaries. As I build relationships with the students and a mutual respect is formed, flexibility will arise. Please be aware that it does take time for members of the class and the teacher to get to know each other and I am looking forward to developing these relationships.

Being a parent is a difficult job. There are many external pressures to make children ‘grow up’ before they need to. One such is ICT – recently we have had an issue with students under pressure to use Snap Chat. Did you know Facebook, Snap Chat etc. has an age restriction of 13. If we support this together it makes parenting easier. I highly recommend supporting each other to make our job partly easier.

I look forward to spending a fantastic year with your child.

Thank you.

Mr. Chris Slattery
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Areas that you would like your child to develop most this year.