Welcome

2017 School Improvement Focus: Reading Comprehension & Vocabulary Skills

Happy New Year! Welcome back to all of our families and a special welcome to our new Prep students and their families. We trust that your holidays were relaxing and that the children are ready for the busy and exciting year ahead! It was wonderful to see all the students arriving back at school, notably taller, excited to see their friends and ready to jump straight into their work. The past two days have been very smooth and the students have impressed us with their enthusiasm and positive work ethics. Right from the very first lesson, we have been most impressed with the high standard of neatness and presentation that the children are exhibiting. As you know, we have a very high level of expectation of your child at McIlwraith, and it is very pleasing to see the students stepping up on the first day to meet these expectations. Our door is always open should you need to discuss your child’s education. The staff and I are excited about the year ahead and we look forward to a busy but exciting year in helping your child achieve their learning goals.

Staffing

We commence the year with 22 enrolments and presently we do not have any changes to staff, other than welcoming Mrs Allira Erlangsen, Japanese language teacher, who is replacing Mrs Manderson whilst she is on maternity leave.

Day 8

Each year our school’s staffing allocation is determined by our enrolment numbers on the eighth day of term one. If we maintain our current enrolment numbers, come day 8 we will secure an additional .5 teacher. Who this will be has not yet been confirmed, but will be finalised ready to commence in week three.

Welcome Preps

A wonderful day was had on Monday as our Preps took in their surroundings and enjoyed all the new experiences that went with the first day of school. A favourite amongst all our Preps was sitting at their new desk. We welcome Clementine, Lacey and Wyatt who are already very settled and comfortable around the other students. One would think that they have been here much longer than the short transition days that they attended at the end of 2016. It was certainly a very smooth transition. So lovely to see the Preps confident and smiling.

Upcoming Events:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26th Jan</td>
<td>Australia Day Public Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>27th Jan</td>
<td>Library Commences</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st Feb</td>
<td>Student Banking Commences</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd Feb</td>
<td>Voluntary School Levy Agreement Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>8th Feb</td>
<td>Day 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd Mar</td>
<td>Leadership Voting</td>
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<tr>
<td>14th Mar</td>
<td>Valentine’s Day</td>
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<td>21st Mar</td>
<td>Harmony Day – Wear Orange</td>
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<td>31st Mar</td>
<td>Easter Bonnet Parade</td>
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<td>31st Mar</td>
<td>Last Day of Term 1</td>
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Remember to keep these important dates on your calendar!!

Principal: Felicity Wallace
Our School Vision: “That everyone is treated with respect and dignity, allowing them to participate in an environment where they feel safe, supported and valued.”

2017 School Priorities: Improvement in Reading with particular focus on Comprehension and Vocabulary Skills
Specialist Lessons
Please note that PE will be on Wednesdays. Students are asked to wear their sports uniform and sneakers on this day. Music will also be on Wednesdays. Students in Year 5 & 6 will attend Japanese lessons on Monday and Tuesday. Religious Instruction will commence in Semester 2.

Absence from School
Earlier in 2016, the report When a child is missing: Remembering Tialeigh – a report into Queensland’s children missing from out-of-home care was released and the Queensland Government has since accepted a recommendation from the Queensland Family and Child Commission that the Department will implement same day notifications advising parents/carers when a child has an unexplained absence from school. In 2017, all schools must have a system that informs parents if their child is not present at school and the absence has not been explained on the same day of the absence. In the past, parents/ carers often have made contact with us after the absence to give a reason for non-attendance. Parents are now asked to make contact with the school before 10am, when student absence will be entered into the electronic roll. We understand that this can slip your mind, so if a notification has not been received by this time, contact will be made to the parents via text message or phone call. Parents are asked to either notify the school in person, by phone: 41572371 or via mobile/text: 0455052940.

Voluntary School Levy
Attached is information about the Voluntary School Levy Scheme. Students were allocated their stationary on the first day of school and will be supplied with items as they need them throughout the year. Parents are asked to sign the agreement form and return to school by next Thursday 02nd February 2017. Payment is $75.00 per child which is due by the end of Term 2, Friday 23rd June 2017. Payment can be made in full from today or in instalments. Please note that the school does not have EFTPOS facilities but payments can be made via cash, BPays or Electronic Fund Transfers.

Leadership Positions
Students in Year 6 are invited to nominate for the School Leadership roles of School Captain. Students in Year 5 and 6 are invited to nominate for Student Council Positions of President, Secretary and Treasurer. Voting will be held next Friday 03rd February 2017. Students nominating are required to prepare a speech to present to the school. The date for our Student Leader Induction will be confirmed as soon as possible.

School Hats & Chair Bags
At McIlwraith we have a ‘No Hat, No Play’ rule. Students are encouraged to be responsible for their own hat by returning it to their bag when not in use. Please ensure that your child can see their name clearly on their hat as this allows for easy identification. Hats can be purchased from the school office for $12.00. Student chair bags are also available for purchase. New enrolments are welcome to purchase a chair bag for $12.00.

Water Bottles
A reminder to ensure that your child has a water bottle that they can refill during the day to stay hydrated.

Newsletter
Printed newsletters are issued to the oldest sibling of each family every Wednesday. If for some reason a family does not receive a Newsletter, spare copies are available from the office. Alternatively, electronic copies can be viewed each Friday by visiting our website at www.mcilwraith.eq.edu.au or via email. If you wish to receive the newsletter via email please complete the attached form providing the best email contact.

**Be Safe**
**Be Responsible**
**Be Respectful**
If children follow these three rules they will have success in all activities!
**School Banking**
The school has a school banking program through the Commonwealth Bank. School banking provides an opportunity to encourage children to develop good saving habits. Children are able to make a deposit through school banking every Wednesday during the school term and are rewarded with deposit prizes.

**Parent Pick Ups**
All students who are being picked up by anyone other than their parents will need to ensure that the school is notified by note, face to face, phone call or text message.

**Home Reading Program**
Students in grades 1-6 all have home reading books which they are expected to read every night and have the reading log signed by a parent. Students in the older grades are encouraged to continue to read out loud so that they can hear any errors in and improve their fluency. We do understand that some nights may be incredibly busy with sports trainings or you may have an unexpected change to your routine. If reading is not able to be completed students are encouraged to let staff know on arrival at school, and then complete their reading before going and playing before school. Please note that Prep students do not have home readers or sight words yet. These will be sent home once students have a greater recognition and recall of letters and their sounds.

**Homework**
Full homework will commence next week. This week students in Year 1 – 7 have to learn their highlighted spelling words and choose five words to put into sentences. Students also have home reading to complete each night. Homework is due on Fridays. Students are welcome to complete homework during the lunch hour if they wish to and are encouraged to manage their time to ensure that it is completed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 1</th>
<th>Grade 2 -6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spelling words every night</td>
<td>Learning Spelling and tables every night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling sheet <em>(starting next week)</em></td>
<td>Reading Comprehension activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sight words</td>
<td>Sight words (if required)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home reader</td>
<td>Choose 5 spelling words and write these neatly into sentences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soundwaves(if not completed during allocated class time)</td>
<td>Home reading every night</td>
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**Library Borrowing**
All library borrowing will commence this Friday 27th January 2017. Students are able to borrow two books to read throughout the week. Books are only to be taken home in a library bag or the students reading folder. If the two borrowed books are not returned each week students will lose their borrowing rights.

**Correct Pencil Grip**
Please ensure you are encouraging children to use the correct pencil grip. This can be seen in the below illustration. If students are having trouble holding their pencil this way a pencil grip can be used. A correct grip of the pencil will help aid neater handwriting.

**Phonic Focus**
The sound that have been consolidating this week is bB’ as in bird and ‘bb’ as in rabbit. Prep students will be focusing on Letter ‘bB’ and Letter ‘tT’.

**Book Covering**
We have a large volume of library books that require covering. If you are free to volunteer your time we would love the help. Alternatively we can send some contact and books home with you. Any help would be appreciated.

**Tuckshop**
There will be no tuckshop this week. A menu will be sent home shortly. Tuckshop bags are attached to the newsletter.

**Student Council Update**

**Icy Poles:** Student Council is selling Zooper Dooper Icy Poles at lunch from Monday – Thursday for $0.50c each.

**Easter Bonnet Parade:** The Easter Bonnet Parade is on again this year. Students are asked to make a gold coin donation if they participate in this event. Prizes will be awarded. This event will take place on the last day of Term 1, Friday 31st March 2017. We will provide different ideas on each week’s newsletter. With plenty of notice we anticipate most students will take part in this event.
**Actors Wanted**

The Gin Gin Theatrical Society Inc. are starting their junior section up and rehearsals start on Tuesday 31st January at 3pm at their hall on the corner of Dear and May Streets, next to the show ground. Entry via small gates. The show they are doing is the traditional pantomime of 'Alice in Wonderland'. If your child would like to be part of this production please come along or phone Wendi Guy on 0404 360 174.

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**Gin Gin Little Athletics 2017 season starts on 22nd April**

* Tiny Tots – U17’s with any level of skill or fitness
* Saturday mornings from April to September in Gin Gin.

Round 9 Get Started Vouchers open for eligible families on 25th January, so get in early as we are a registered Get Started Club and this round covers our upcoming season.

For more information on Little Athletics please go to [www.ginginathletics.org.au](http://www.ginginathletics.org.au) or phone 0422 303 223

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**Colour Me Happy Fun Run Gin Gin and the 4671 Skate Jam** will both be all-inclusive events that celebrate and acknowledges the diversity of young people in our region. These great events will provide entertainment, information stalls and activities for young people and families in the region. Young people, parents, grandparents and the broader community are welcome to feast on the sights and sounds of what these events have to offer with a theme of being active and having access to information for young people and families. These two events will be held on Monday 3rd April 2017:

1. Colour Me Happy Fun Run - 8.30am to 11.00am starting and finishing at Gin Gin State Primary School
2. 4671 Skate Jam from 11.30- 2.30 at the Gin Gin Skate Park, May Street, Gin Gin

At these events we would like to provide community services, groups, sporting groups, entertainers and businesses an opportunity to showcase themselves by being a stallholder at one or both events. If you would be interested in being a sponsor we would love to hear from you. If you have any questions please call Andrea Bax on 4130 4175 or Ash Tye-Johnson on 4130 4150 or email andrea.bax@bundaberg.qld.gov.au.

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**Yours in Education**

Felicity Wallace