Who would believe that we are already halfway through the children's first term at school. To celebrate the end of first term, the children and their buddies will be going on their very first excursion. Details are attached to the bottom of this newsletter.

It was wonderful to hear of so many of our Prep parents attending the information session hosted by Tina Coumbe. Please remember that it is now mandatory to have attended one of these information sessions and have a working with children's check before helping out in the classroom.

On Monday Morning the Prep teachers will also display a roster in the window where you can put your name down. We would really love parent helpers in either the first 15 - 20 minutes of the day helping with listening to children read or from 11.30 if you can help for an hour in our literacy sessions. See your teacher for more information.

The children have been working hard in all aspects of the curriculum. In Literacy we have been focusing on our sounds. At Rye we focus on the Cascade literacy model. This involves learning the sounds of the alphabet in a special order so that the children can start forming words straight away. We focused on the sounds a, m, s, t for the first 2 weeks and now we have progressed onto i, f, d and r.

Ask your child about the ants in the apple song and cued articulation (hand signal) for each sound. It’s important that the children practice these sounds not only verbally, but to also recognise them by sight and write them.

We’ve also been looking at a lot of rhyme in the classroom. We are then writing down all of our rhyming words and noticing the patterns a lot of these words have. This also helps with the children's spelling ability. Please practice at home, look for rhyming words in books and play rhyming games in the car.

Important Dates for Term 1

Tuesday 1st April – Playground excursion with buddies (don’t forget your $2.50)

Tuesday 11th March - Alphashow production $9.00 (Don’t forget to pay at the office)

Week of Tuesday 11th March ~ Preps begin full time 9.00am to 3.00pm. Please pick children up after school from the classroom.

Monday 10th March ~ Labour Day Holiday.

Friday 4th of April ~ Last day of Term 1.

Tuesday 22nd April ~ First day of Term 2.

Please do not forget to return all permission forms as soon as possible.
We have also been reading a lot of books in the classroom and talking about building our knowledge of the topics in these books. This is called building ‘schema’. This is an important aspect of reading as it is constructed from experience and stored in memory.

This is important when reading because it eventually helps you with your comprehension. Schema is an organized chunk of knowledge or experience, often accompanied by feelings or emotions associated with experience at the time the information was stored. For example, when someone mentions the word "exams," your mind begins searching all the related information stored in memory.

That information may include specific information you learned for exams, feelings associated with exams, or even sounds associated with taking an exam. It also helps with the child’s level of comprehension as they have a wide palette of knowledge to draw information from.

So when reading, talk about what you are reading. Talk about the connections you may have with the storyline or the characters. This all helps build schema – an important part of the learning process.

Some children who have already mastered their sounds will be given a set of words they can practice instead. Please remember in Kathy Walker’s words…”Not all children are ready to learn the same thing in the same way at the same time.” Don’t get upset if your child hasn’t mastered a sound, letter or word. In time they will. We just have to provide them with a holistic, calm and unpressured environment to practice.

Hence, investigation time has been a wonderful opportunity for the children to practice the literacy and numeracy we have introduced to them in our explicit teaching after recess every day. We have had children writing orders and developing their schema at the surf shack.

We’ve had children writing their sounds and letters on the whiteboard, children practicing their counting at the tinkering table and sound books being created as an ongoing project in the work under progress signs. A wonderful sight to see.

In numeracy the children have been talking about capacity. Ask them and you may be surprised! We are also learning to quickly subitize numbers (counting dots on flash cards) Ten frames and dot cards can be used to develop students' subitizing skills, the ability to "instantly see how many". This skill plays a fundamental role in the development of students’ understanding of number.
End of term celebration for the Preps and their Buddies!!

On Tuesday the 1st of April all Preps and their Grade 5 buddies will be involved in an end of term excursion.

After recess we will all stroll down to the Rye Playground for a play. There will also be sports equipment provided for some alternative fun and games.

Afterwards, a special treat has been organised through the gelato shop "Vulcano".

For $2.50 they will provide your child with 2 scoops of any gelato flavour in a cup. If your child has allergies that may be present in gelato please let us know. They are able to offer alternatives.

Please bring your money in a named envelope to school before the end of March 31st to guarantee this wonderful treat!

(It would be awful if your child missed out!)