Information Package Level 1-Foundation 2013

We are very happy to welcome new and returning families to Foundation 2013. The children have already settled pleasingly into their new grades and are connecting with other students. They have begun Literacy programs in their rooms and attended specialist classes. The school entry interviews (Wednesdays) are underway and these will assist teachers to prepare and plan for children's individual needs for the coming year.

Level 1 Team members
- Drew Baxter Foundation B
- Tracy McPhee Lam Foundation M
- Julie Gledhill Foundation G

Specialist teachers
- PE - Sarah Clusker
- Library - Kim Wheatley
- Music - Lorelle Caulfield-Lloyd
- Art - Pia Chadwick
- LOTE-Mandarin - Ainslie Pezynski

Early Years Literacy

- 2 hour block, 5 times a week. This involves reading, writing, spelling and speaking and listening activities.
- Reading activities:
  Whole group, shared reading of big book. Daily focus topics such as rhyming or speech marks.
  Task board, visual representation of group tasks for the day
  Small groups with activities focused on developing skills e.g initial sound or letter identification.
  Guided Reading: Teacher with small groups are explicitly taught reading strategies.
  Whole group, Share Bear time (Today I have learnt...)
- Writing activities:
  Includes a variety of genres: procedural, report, explanation, recount, narrative features, e.g. Nursery Rhymes. Often linked with our Integrated Studies topic.
  Writing block also incorporates:
  *Handwriting sessions.
  *Spelling (letter sounds, blending sounds, common used words).
- Speaking & Listening:
  Students will have the opportunity to bring something into school to talk about or they may wish to just talk to the class about something special. This enhances the opportunities for each child to become a confident speaker and incorporates skills such as: voice projection, eye contact, keeping the audience's attention.

Early Years Numeracy

A hands on and often open-ended approach incorporating concrete materials /written equations, problem solving & estimation. We encourage children to find mathematical concepts in everyday situations and be able to break down complex problems into manageable chunks using different strategies. These might include strategies estimation, drawings, graphs or working backwards.
The main areas in Numeracy are:

- **Number:**
  - Counting, pattern and order and place value
- **Space:**
  - Shapes, patterns and location
- **Measurement, Chance and Data:**
  - Pictographs, time, using descriptive terms (longer, shorter) and elements of chance
- **Working Mathematically:**
  - Solving problems, describe simple patterns and calculators.

**Take home Readers**

Today the children have a ‘take-home’ book and reader cover in their bag which should be decorated and covered in contact. The ‘take-home’ book must be changed daily. These books are meant to be ‘easily’ read by your child, so that each child will achieve success when reading and develop a love of reading. It is very important that the children enjoy their home reading with their family and are not labouring over difficult books. Books are for enjoyment and the home reading program should reinforce this concept. Some helpful suggestions to help your child become confident readers are listed below. Please encourage your child to develop independence to change their own reader each morning.

**When children read to you:**

- Always give them your close attention and display interest in the story.
- When children become disinterested by not knowing a word remind them to check and use the strategies listed on the inside cover of the reader folder:
  - Read on to the end of the sentence
  - Start again and read the whole sentence.
  - Use the initial letter as a cue for the sound.
- If children self-correct to regain meaning praise
  - e.g. “Good, now that makes sense”
- If children lose meaning of what is being read, ask a question which focuses on the meaning,
  - e.g. Does that make sense?
  - Would the bear really do that?
- Be patient as the children endeavour to work out the text.
  - Allow them to try out the strategies they have developed for understanding the text.
- Show enthusiasm about children's attempts to make sense out of the text
  - e.g. I like the way you ...
- Encourage children to read
  - To other children
  - To older children
  - Their favourite part of the story
  - To themselves, then tell you in their own words about the story.

**How can I help my child with reading?**

- Read to your child as often as you can
- Encourage your child to choose the books you read together and help your child to tell the story from the pictures in the book.
- Talk about the books you read and the people, things and animals in them.
- Draw attention to the illustrations when reading to your child.
- Enrol your child in the local library.
Select books that describe familiar experiences, concepts, and objects as well as fairy tales and fantasy stories.

Make sure your child sees members of the family reading.

Buy books as presents, let your child help you choose them.

Keep CDs of favourite stories and songs in the car to play on long journeys.

Encourage your child to join in and read too.

Help your child to recognise his or her own name. Write simple dedications inside the child's own books and encourage them to start building their own book collection.

Teach your child nursery rhymes and songs.

Select books that use repetition and capture the rhyme of language e.g. *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*.

Tell stories on the way to the shops, at bath time and bedtime.

Place labels around the home, e.g. "Kath's favourite books".

Hold the book so the child can see the pictures and writing.

Let the child hold the book and turn the pages.

Encourage the child to join in and 'read' too.

Help your child to tell the story from the pictures in the book.

Leave the book handy for private reading to teddy.

Talk about everyday print, e.g. "We are going in here to get a hamburger. See the sign says 'Harry's Hamburgers'."

Sometimes point to the word as you read.

Talk about your plans, e.g. "Today I am going to make a cake, let's look at the recipe.

Write shopping lists in front of your child and talk about what you are doing.

Before beginning to read, settle your child and talk a little about the book e.g. This looks as if it is going to be a funny story."

Accept and praise your child's attempts to read.

Visit the local book shop.

Make a cloth book bag to take with you wherever you go.

Encourage your child to find letters that begin with the same letter as his or her name.

Recognise letters on car numberplates.

Set up a home message board and write messages each day e.g. "Today we are going to Grandma's."

**Integrated Learning**

Our focus is on learning through an inquiry process and the Thinking Curriculum - challenging and extending children's thinking. There is a focus on the development of research skills via the use of technology including netbooks and iPads in the classrooms, the Library and various support services and references. These skills are developed through a range of content areas across the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS).

The topics for each term are:

**Term 1:** All about Me.

Connecting with their Year 6 buddies.

Visit from Firemen, Ambulance and Responsible Pet Ownership.

**Term 2:** The Community- Where we live.

Excursion to Busy Kids traffic school

**Term 3:** The Farm.

Excursion to Myuna Farm

**Term 4:** Fairy Tales and Nursery Rhyme.

Incursion - Fairy tale Fiasco

SPECIALIST INCURSIONS- Children will also participate in specialists incursions.
Developmental Curriculum

Developmental Curriculum, 'Investigations' focuses on the emotional, social, cognitive, language and physical development of each individual child. This will be achieved through different centres of open ended tasks that will be set up in the classroom. For example writing centres, nature tables and music appreciation tasks. These experiences promote skills such as reflective thinking, problem solving, decision making, enquiring, risk taking, thinking, planning, team work, interacting, and socialising. The Developmental Curriculum has been developed by Kathy Walker, author and educational consultant.

SPECIALIST PROGRAMS

LIBRARY PROGRAM - FOUNDATION

Foundation children will have a weekly library borrowing session. Children will be encouraged to browse and borrow and will be assisted with their selections. Children are able to borrow one book for first term while they become familiar with the procedures and routines of the Library; this will increase in Term 2.

All students require a strong, durable library bag which is labelled with their full name and grade. Your Library day is Wednesday, from March 7th. For the month of February while children are attending individual interviews Foundation students will attend Library sessions on Thursday. There is also a ‘RETURNS’ tub outside the Library door and books may be returned in this tub every day.

The Library is also open to all children at lunchtime on Wednesday and Thursday. If you have any queries about the Library program I look forward to discussing them with you.

Kim Wheatley

PHYSICAL EDUCATION- FOUNDATION

Physical Education (P.E.) is the process through which motor skills and fitness skills are taught in conjunction with the development of the child's personal and social skills.

It promotes the development of understanding and, where relevant, skills in a range of areas, including:

- Fundamental movement patterns and coordinated body actions
- The concept of fitness
- Physical activity
- Growth and development
- Effective relationships
- Identity
- Safety, challenge and risk
- Food and nutrition
- Health

What to bring to P.E.

At Wattle Park P.S. all children from Foundation to grade 6 participate in the program for a minimum of 40 minutes per week. As the program is based around physical activity it is highly recommended that the children wear runners to school on their P.E. day. They should bring a drink bottle filled with water to ensure that they remain hydrated. During terms 1 and 4 students also need to have a broad brimmed or bucket hat and it is advised that they have a small tube of their own personal sunscreen to apply.

Swimming

The aquatics component of the program is run in term 4 for the entire school. It is held at the P.L.C. pool by qualified staff and all children are expected to attend. You will receive more details of the swimming program later in the year.

Miss Clusker
MUSIC - FOUNDATION

The children in Foundation have a Music lesson each week in the Music Room. The program is conceptually based with the children participating in activities focusing on areas such as beat - recognising beat and no beat, pitch - recognising and creating high and low sounds, dynamics - loud and soft, tempo - fast and slow. The Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) provide a broad framework.

The emphasis in Foundation is on participation as the children explore and respond to a range of music through dance, movement, singing, creating and playing. They enjoy learning and developing a repertoire of songs with accompanying movements and dance sequences or creative movement. The children are introduced to a variety of musical instruments, mainly tuned and untuned percussion, that are incorporated into weekly lessons.

Performance is a big part of the Music program at Wattle Park with events such as our School Concert and Carols night at the school. The children learn the material, based upon an overall theme, in Music classes. This is supported by additional rehearsals with their class teachers. More details about these will be provided closer to the dates.

Each year we also hold Music incursions that enhance the existing program, exposing the children to a variety of art forms. This year we have two incursions, the first of which will provide an insight into Indian Music and Dance - from Traditional to Bollywood. This performance and interactive show will allow the children to enjoy and participate in a hands-on experience. Our second incursion involves a very special performance of The Barber Of Seville by Opera Australia. These incursions will take place at school with the support material providing the basis of the Music program in the preceding and precluding weeks.

Lorelle Caulfield-Lloyd

MANDARIN AND ASIAN STUDIES - FOUNDATION

All Level 1 students will participate in a weekly one hour Mandarin and Asian Studies session. Mandarin and Asian Studies days are on Tuesday's for FB students and Friday's for F6 and FM students. The Mandarin and Asian Studies program focuses on students enjoying and developing an appreciation of China and embracing one of its main languages, Mandarin. Students will also be introduced to many Asian countries and will learn how they are both similar and different to Australia. Students will be taught in accordance with the school norms and will develop their knowledge based on Level 1 term units. Students will be introduced to topics such Family, Body Parts, Transport, Animals and Pets. Students will also be given the opportunity to learn and differentiate between China, Australia and other Asian countries via many forms of media including DVDs, posters, books and the internet. The Mandarin and Asian Studies program also aims to develop skills that will enable students to become global citizens of the 21st century. By the time students complete their schooling, they should have developed an understanding of Asia, developed informed attitudes and values about Asian people and cultures, know about contemporary and traditional Asia, connect Australia and Asia and be able to communicate with people of an Asian region.

Throughout the year, students, parents and the wider community will have the opportunity to participate in special school and external events, such as celebrations and festivities held by the Local and City Municipalities, shared meals at Asian restaurants, Asian Night Market, a variety of activities during Asian Literacy Week, as well as incursions and excursions relating to our studies on China and Asia. You will receive specific information closer to these events. All children will be encouraged to participate in sessions and practise their Mandarin vocabulary regularly. Please ensure that your child has their Mandarin and Asian Studies display folder at school for every session.

Ainslie Peszynski
ART - FOUNDATION

The art program over the year includes the exploration of both two and three-dimensional materials in the form of drawing, printing, painting, collage, modelling, construction and threads and textiles. Particular focus is given to the art elements of line, shape, colour, texture, tone and pattern.

In the early years it is very important to provide children with a hands on, sensory experience. The students are given time to explore and experiment with different materials and techniques enabling 'discoveries' to be made along the way.

All students are encouraged to push and challenge their materials and techniques as the process of making is just as important, if not more, than the outcome.

In learning to respond to various aspects of the arts we will discuss and draw inspiration from many artists and great periods of art, both historical and contemporary, famous and those in our classroom.

Student work is often displayed in and outside the Art room and will be showcased later in the year during the concert and art show. All students are involved in the design and construction of both props and the backdrop for the school concert.

Please note that all students are required to wear a smock (this can be anything that covers the uniform from an apron to an old thick t-shirt or shirt) during art lessons.

Sun Smart

Please remember that Term 1 and 4 are Sun Smart terms. Students are to wear a named sun smart hat. Students are encouraged to wear sunscreen which may be applied before recesses and lunchtime. Water bottles - ‘pop top’ for classroom use (containing water only) are encouraged.

Parent/Teacher Communication

Term 1 is an opportunity for parents, teachers and students to meet for our Family Teacher Meetings on Monday the 18th February. At this time parents have the opportunity to provide information to the classroom teacher that will support the child’s learning. This is not a time for the teacher to report back to parents. Written reports are provided at the end of Terms 2 and 4. After reports are sent home in June there is a time set for parents and teachers to meet to discuss the student report. These reports will indicate the expected levels in Level 1 and the level your child has achieved. Appointments can be made at different times over the year by both the parent and the teacher when there are issues requiring discussion.

Medical Issues

If a child is well enough to attend school but requires medication to be administered during school hours, parents should supply the medication in a pharmacy-dispensed container that gives the name of the student and the dose required. The name of the medication should be clearly marked on the container. Accompanying the container, parents are requested to provide written instructions regarding the medication required, the date/s to be administered, the dose and the time it is to be given. Pro formas are available from the office. Please note non-prescription medications will not be administered.

Parent Involvement

As part of the home-school link we invite parents to help facilitate the daily implementation of the school curriculum. Helpers will be required for various activities such as excursions, literacy block activities and classroom assistance.
Please note it is a requirement that you have a “Working with Children” Card (obtained from the Post Office), if you wish to help in the classroom and attend excursions.

The Parent Helper training course will be running in Term 1. So keep your eyes open for further information. Your help will be much appreciated. (Please, no toddlers as they may disrupt the program)

**HOMEWORK POLICY**
The homework component of the curriculum begins in Foundation. Wattle Park Primary School has introduced a homework policy across the whole school for all children. We would like children to begin good routines in Foundation at home with regard to efficiently completing set homework by the due date. Homework will be issued on Monday and collected the following Monday. Please see your child’s teacher if you have further queries.

**CONCLUSION:**
If you wish to see us you are more than welcome, but please come before 9:00am or after 3:30pm. As we have many after and before school duties to attend, an appointment is advisable.

We are preparing for a fabulous year and the children are ready to launch into school life. We look forward to working with you this year and hope you and your child enjoy Foundation 2013.

Drew Baxter       Tracy McPhee Lam       Julie Gledhill       Gayle Cope
FB                FM                     FG                     Principal

Gayle Cope