Dear Parents of students in Prep,

It’s hard to believe that half a year is over and our enthusiastic, independent Prep students are soon going to be celebrating their 100th day at school on Thursday, the 31st of July! It is wonderful to witness their enthusiasm towards learning. They embrace every experience and are not afraid to take risks! We are so proud of our students’ achievements so far, as young writers, readers, mathematicians and members of our school community.

This term our unit of work is: ‘Being Healthy and Active...a healthy body, a healthy mind’. Students will develop the understanding that there are things we need to do to keep our bodies and minds healthy...nutrition, exercise, hygiene, rest, feeling good and belonging. We have been looking at our snacks and lunches, discussing their nutritional value and coming up with some questions and wonderings that we will hopefully clarify as we investigate the unit further. Please don’t be alarmed if your child comes home and questions whether or not their snack or lunch that you are providing them with is healthy. We encourage thinking and questioning however, don’t expect to have all the answers to their questions. Encourage them to talk about what they have been learning and share your knowledge and experience on the topic. Our aim is not to judge what everyone is having for snack and lunch but to promote healthier choices even if these can be difficult at times. If any parents are experts in this field...dieticians, nurses, dentists, personal trainers...we would love to have you in as guest speakers. Some parents may want to come in and take a cooking session, others may be gardening experts who may want to encourage us to plant in our vegie garden or you may want to come in and take a fitness/yoga session. See one of us to discuss any ideas you may have and how we can incorporate them into our inquiry unit.

Our swimming program has commenced with 20 of our Prep students attending every Friday afternoon. Please note that when one of the Prep teachers is at the pool, her students are sent to the other two Prep grades for the hour before assembly and are engaged in work related to ‘Being Healthy and Active’.

What we expect the students to learn in reading:
Students will continue to select 5 “Just Right” books on a weekly basis and read these daily at school as well as at home with you. This is an important routine and your praise and encouragement as your child’s reading develops, is really important. A friendly reminder to sign the log book nightly to show that you value their efforts as young readers and discuss their reading goal or how they feel about reading and what they may need support with. This term, students will further develop a variety of strategies to decode words to help them understand text.
Students will make predictions before, during and after reading and make connections with personal experiences. They will also be encouraged to explain why they think that.

E.g.: “I think the dog ran away when he thought he was going to have a bath because my dog doesn’t like baths. He tries to escape as well. I think he doesn’t like feeling cold and wet. It’s like when I come out of the pool.”

Students will be encouraged to think about the characters in Narratives and what they are like; where the story takes place, what happens in the story and why, in order to retell and summarise what they’ve read in their own words.

Our new high frequency words for the term are…

you, had, there, that, but

Students are encouraged to read and write these automatically and keep practising the ones we have covered already.

**What we expect the students to learn in writing:**

Students will be given daily opportunities to write about things they know about and build on their belief that “they are great young writers with great ideas”. They will be encouraged to write more about their message, whether fiction or factual and include supportive details and examples. They will be supported to reread, “revise and edit” their own writing. They will be asked questions like: Have you read back what you have written? Does it make sense? Have you included everything you needed to say? What changes can you make?

Students will continue to discuss their writing with their teacher during a ‘writing conference’ … a ‘chat’ between the ‘writer’ and the teacher. They will be asked questions like: What writing piece are you working on at the moment? What are you doing as a writer that you’re happy with? What do you need help/support with? This will result in setting an individual writing goal for the student. Just like a reading goal, it will tell the student what he/she needs to practise.

**What we expect the students to learn in mathematics:**

Students will continue to build on their knowledge of Number using concrete materials (counters, icy-pole sticks, unifix blocks, dice, playing cards, ten-frames and calculators) with an emphasis on ‘all we know about a number’ and use mathematical language like: single digit, double digit, comes before, comes after, is one more than, is one less than, is an odd/even number, has one ten and __ more, …

They will be making the total of 10 by putting two collections together and exploring simple addition and subtraction, developing their understanding through stories. They will be finding the total of two amounts by using the strategy of counting on from the biggest number.

In the next couple of weeks, to celebrate 100 days at school, students will be asked to start thinking of 100 items they would like to bring. Things students have brought in in the past have been…100 plastic spoons, 100 cotton buds, 100 stickers, 100 cups, 100 words cut out from the newspaper, 100 feathers, 100 pasta pieces, 100 buttons... the list is endless!

Students will be arranging these in groups of 10 and displaying their total of 100, on the day. They will also be asked to bring and share a plate of healthy food.

*Please remember to return the 2 specialist reports to your child’s teacher.*
Important Dates:

- **Thursday, 31 July**, *Celebrating 100th day at school!*
- **Wednesday, 10 September**, *Bush Dance.*
- **Thursday, 11 September**, *Taking Action: Our Preps making and selling ‘healthy options’ during lunch to students in in grades 1-6.*
  We will be sending more information home closer to the date.
- **Wednesday, 17 September**, *School Sports Day*

Specialist timetable:

*Swimming: Friday afternoon*

*Footsteps: Preps learning the moves to “ABC” (Jackson 5) every Monday afternoon. We will be performing this as our concert item later on in the year.*

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Thank you for your continued support and partnership!

*Kind Regards,*
*Prep Teachers Jenny, Jamie and Thomai*