Sunshine Heights PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newsletter: **SCIENCE & SUSTAINABILITY**

Term 1, 2016

Welcome back everyone and a warm welcome to all our new families. This year I am very excited to be part of a new program to Sunshine Heights P.S. It is the Science and Sustainability Program which all students from Foundation to Year 6 will take part in. It will run for the whole year from Tuesday to Friday and in term 1 we will be studying the Biological Sciences and looking at living things. With the Sustainability component, we will look at the waste we produce at school and take action to reduce our personal impact on the environment. We will learn to care for our land and its resources by getting involved in composting and setting up a Worm Farm. We have assigned two Green Team monitors for each classroom who will be responsible for looking after the mini compost bin in their room. The Green Team will also be assigned other duties during the term, such as, keeping the outdoor compost bins clean and educating the rest of the school on what can and cannot be placed in these bins. Some students will also work in groups to devise an action plan to help reduce waste at our school. They will devise a goal and then present their plan to their audience using posters and class presentations. The year 6 students will build an understanding of their personal impact on our planet by looking at how rubbish enters the marine environment. They will make comparisons between areas they know and the estimated area of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. This will help them to rethink their ideas about waste and take action to reduce the impact of their personal attitudes and behaviours on the environment.

As we will be involved in planting during the year, I have purchased safety goggles for students to wear. I will also have disposable gloves for the students to wear when handling potting mix. If your child has their own gardening gloves, you can send them along to school with your child's name on them.

*__Foundation students__ will all be making their own __Grass Head Person__ towards the end of term 1, so we will need you to send along a small glass jar (labelled with name) and a woman's stocking (legs only). Thank you for your help.

What we expect the students to learn in Foundation:

This term, the Foundation students will learn that living things have basic needs, including food and water. They will begin to distinguish between human needs and wants. They will observe, pose questions, discuss concepts and start to think about an animal's life cycle. They will also learn about basic features of a plant by observing plants in their environment and growing their own plants from seeds.

What we expect the students to learn in Year 1:

This term, the year 1 students will learn about the needs of living things to survive. They will look at the external features of living things, including human parts of the body and what each part can do. Also, how living things react to the world around them. Eg., What happens to your skin when you feel cold? Students will look at the similarities and differences among living things. Furthermore, they will learn about the main features of plants and their functions and look at different habitats. Students will be involved in planting, experimenting, posing questions, predicting, presenting and communicating their observations.

What we expect the students to learn in Year 2:

This term students will focus on how living things grow, change and have offspring. They will observe the growth and change in themselves and others at different stages of life and identify the physical changes that take place such as height, weight, facial features, etc. They will also identify the changes that plants undergo as they grow. They will look at different animal life cycles to understand that animals grow and reproduce offspring similar to themselves. Year 2 students will take part in planting flower seeds.

What we expect the students to learn in Years 3:

This term in Biological Sciences, students will understand the difference between living, non-living and once-living things. They will do an experiment to see how plants move and respond to different cues in the environment. They will compare between structural features and functions of animals and plants. They will learn how animals and plants are classified. Finally, they will look at what a palaeontologist does and how this science has enabled us to understand patterns and relationships of pre-historic living things.

What we expect the students to learn in Years 4:

This term students will learn about the life cycle of a typical flowering plant. Students will plant their own bean seeds to see if they grow at the same rate. They will observe, record results and make conclusions. Students will also learn about different animal life cycles such as frogs and mammals. They will understand that life cycles can be affected by environmental factors such as, wind, fire, drought, pollution, etc. They will discover how living things obtain energy to live. They will learn the difference between producers, consumers and decomposers. They will investigate what happens to dead plants by doing their own experiment, observing, recording results and making conclusions. Finally they will learn about adaptation and the interdependence of living things within ecosystems and how food chains work.

What we expect the students to learn in Years 5:

This term, the year 5 students will be looking at the properties of a living thing and learning about the life processes of living things. That is, movement, respiration, sensitivity, nutrition, growth, excretion, reproduction and homeostasis. Students will learn about the structural features of plants and animals and the function of each. Also, how plants and animals have adapted to their various environments. We will focus on plants grown for food. Students will be involved in an experiment to demonstrate how plants absorb and lose water.

What we expect the students to learn in Years 6:

This term, the year 6 students will learn about the different soil types and the effect of salinity on fertility. They will learn about the behaviour of fungi and their role in food production and spoilage. Furthermore, they will learn about plant and animal adaptations to the environment while looking at various biomes and why some animals migrate or hibernate. Students will carry out investigations, make observations and write their own conclusions.

If you have any queries / suggestions about the Science & Sustainability Program please see Mrs Polini at school. I am available Tuesday to Friday. Otherwise, you may contact me via my email address.

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Regards,
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Sunshine Heights P.S.