The middle school team would like to take this opportunity to welcome you all to term one 2016. This year the middle school team is made up of Natarsha Nicholson, Emma Govan, Carol Martins, Steven Montgomery, Sarah McKeown and Warren Hales (Team Leader). We are very excited to be working together in a team and we are looking forward to the many fun learning adventures ahead.

At Newport Lakes Primary School we have a one hour reading, writing and mathematics session each day.

Our four specialists, circle time, inquiry and assemblies make up the rest of a very busy school week.

**Literacy**

The structure of lessons are consistent across the school. In reading the students will be working on a particular focus for the week. They will be told what the reading focus is and then they will work on developing their proficiency and understanding of that focus. Students will be working in a variety of group situations such as reciprocal teaching groups (or ‘reading circles’), reading with a buddy as well as working ‘one on one’ with the teacher and independent reading. With teacher guidance the students will set goals for their learning and reflect on their understanding of the task. The teachers will be working with the students to develop their comprehension and understanding of the texts they are reading.

We have high expectations of the students and will work on developing their independence within the reading session. Our goal is to improve student comprehension and develop a lifelong love of reading.
We will continue to have daily writing sessions that have a clear focus. They will follow a similar structure to reading where a writing focus is discussed and modelled. Students then practice the skill in their classroom lessons. We will continue to use our Writer’s Notebooks as a source of inspiration and ideas as well as a place to enjoy writing without constraints. We will have explicit teaching sessions that focus on the structure of various text types such as information reports, narratives and persuasive writing as well as poetry. The structure will be examined and the language common to the text will be explored. Students once again will work both independently and in small cooperative groups where they are encouraged to support each other by giving and receiving feedback to improve their writing.

Spelling will continue to be a focus for the middle school with students partaking in varied spelling games/activities in class, which they are encouraged to also practise at home. Students will be given weekly spelling lists which they will work on both at home and at school. Each Monday the students will conduct a short spelling test on the previous week’s words and receive their new words for the following week. As well as specific spelling practice activities, the students will conduct sound and spelling investigations on a weekly basis to help them become proficient spellers.

**Numeracy**

In Mathematics the students will work on developing their mathematical understandings on a variety of topics. They will work independently and in small groups on a range of activities that will support and challenge their learning. The mathematics sessions will continue to follow the structure that they are familiar with including a warm up, introduction, independent or small group work and a share time where the students discuss their learning. Topics to be covered this term are:

- Number/Place Value
- Pattern and Algebra
- Addition/Subtraction
- Shape

Each area will be covered over a 2 week period.
The students in the middle school should continue to work on their Mathletics at home ensuring they are developing their speed and accuracy in automatic response and understanding of place value.

Inquiry -
This term, our inquiry learning is all about how and why people explore. The children will spend time learning about a variety of explorers including the necessary attributes of a good explorer and the consequences of expeditions. Throughout this unit, the children will develop their ability to collaborate, communicate and independently manage themselves and their learning.

Homework
The students will have a homework notebook which will contain their weekly spelling words as well as a weekly graph checklist for the students to fill out which displays what they are working on at home.

In Grade 3/4 the homework expectations for our students are:
- 30 minutes of reading at least 3-4 times per week
- Practising spelling words
- Practising times tables (from term 2 onwards) or other mental number facts (addition facts etc.)
- Other project assignments that may be handed out throughout the year
- Mathletics tasks at parent discretion

School Bags
Please encourage your child to check that they have their diary and homework book in their school bag each morning.

Tissues
We would appreciate if families could donate a box of tissues to their child’s class, for the students to use.
We are very much looking forward to a fantastic year in 3/4. If you need to discuss a matter with your child’s teacher during the year, please do not hesitate to contact us directly or contact the office to make an appointment.

Regards,

Middle School Team