Year 3/4 Team Parent Newsletter - Term 1 2015

The middle school team would like to take this opportunity to welcome you all to term one 2015. This year the middle team is made up of Natarsha Nicholson, Sharon Rogers, Emma Govan, Carol Martins, Warren Hales and Denise O’Shea. 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 and science, circle time and inquiry make up the 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, reading with a buddy as well as working one on one with the teacher. 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 work. 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 a daily rotational spelling activity that we call ‘Spelling Sports’ a feature of each morning. The weekly activities will culminate with a spelling test on Monday morning. Students will work on word lists as well as their individual words.

**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 - A Soldier’s Story

At Newport Lakes Primary School, students take part in two, one-hour inquiry lessons each week. Inquiry teaching and learning encourages the students to ask questions and search for meaning. The inquiry process activates thinking on many levels and in many forms which encourages students to think about the world around them in order to make meaning. Students will begin the term learning about key inquiry skills of thinking, evaluating, collaborating, negotiating, self-management, time-management, research and communication. In doing this, setting the students up for their inquiry learning during the term and year.

During Term 1 students will be focusing on the topic of Celebrations and Commemorations. As ANZAC day will be approaching in April there will be a focus on this important day with an excursion early Term 2 to the Melbourne Museum. Here the students will attend a special World War One exhibit that is visiting.

During this term students will consider the following key questions:

- How and why do people choose to remember significant events of the past?
- What are some days/weeks celebrated or commemorated in Australia?
- What is the importance of symbols and emblems associated with such events?
- What are some celebrations and commemorations around the world?

Science - Package It Better

This term students will take part in approximately one science lesson per week. The focus for term one being chemical sciences (this will also carry forward into term two). Within this unit students will explore materials, their properties and characteristics. This will be done in a team environment through a series of hands on activities.

Key areas of learning that students will consider include:

- Differences between natural and processed materials.
- The characteristics and uses of different packages and the materials used to make them.
- The durability and capacity of different materials.
- Factors contributing to the strength of package designs, such as shape.
Homework

In Grade 3/4 the homework expectations for our students are:

- 30 minutes of reading per night
- Practising spelling words
- Maths activities (maths worksheet will be handed out each Monday, to be returned the following Monday)
- Practising times tables (from term 2 onwards)
- 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 spelling folder in their school bag each morning.