



St Joseph's School
50 Kelvin Street
Timaru

30 January 2012

ROOM 1 NEWSLETTER

Dear Parents/Caregivers

I have had a very enjoyable and relaxing Christmas holiday break. While travelling on a plane I had an inspiration to change my previous years learning analogy and integration of key competencies from learning to ride a bike to taking a flight on an aeroplane (pre-flight planning on the tarmac, taking off and then soaring in the clouds!). More flight details will be revealed as the term progresses.

I am really looking forward to the many new challenges for myself and the children (my co-pilots) during 2012.

The purpose of this newsletter is to outline some classroom routines and organization, curriculum content and useful information specific to Room 1.

READING

A shared book will be this week's focus for reading. Reading packs will be operational in Weeks 2/3, i.e. reading material - instructional reader for the day, library book and poem book. Reading at home can be by your child, with your child or modelled for them by you. It would be great if you could encourage phrasing and fluency when reading by using simple prompts like,

"make your reading sound like talking."

After reading the story, looking at the pictures and asking your child to retell the story in their own words is a great way to develop sequencing, detail and comprehension of what they have read.



Children will be working at a similar reading level or just below their December 2011 level for the first few weeks of the term. Please don't panic if your child has slipped as this may be due to 'summer slide.'

'Summer slide is the loss of academic skills over the summer holidays. As the old saying goes, if you don't use it, you lose it. Studies show that children who don't have academically stimulating summer environments, in fact, can have lower reading and math skills when they return to school in February.'

Instruction reading books will go home on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. This is a great opportunity for your child to practice 'managing self' by taking responsibility for making sure they are taking home reading material every night and returning this the next day.

Our Library day is Thursday and poem books go home on a Monday. There is usually an activity that corresponds with the poem. Extra for experts - challenge your child to learn the poem during the week and recite by memory!

Please encourage/remind your child to return reading packs daily.

HOME READING JOURNALS

These will begin in Week 3. Filling in these journals with your child and working towards the reading certificates is a great way to encourage regular nightly reading.

SPELLING NOTEBOOKS

These will begin in Week 3. I run a buddy spelling programme with Room 6 pupils. Spelling words from the essential lists 1 to 7 are entered into the notebook and tested on a Friday by the pupils. Spelling notebooks are taken home on a Monday night and return to school on a Friday for testing.

EXERCISE BOOKS

Exercise books will be stored on the shelves at the front and back of the classroom. Please ensure books are named and labelled correctly.



Other classroom items will be stored in your child's tote tray.

MORNING ROUTINE

When your child arrives in the mornings I will expect them to:

1. Carry their own bag
2. Hang up their bag
3. Put away reading book in browsing basket
4. Put away other exercise books/RE folder
5. Put reading pack in green box crate
6. Put library books in cream crate
7. Unstack their chair

If it is possible (I know mornings can be a very busy time of the day), in order for your child to have time to carry out the morning routine and then have a little bit of social interaction with their peers, they will need at least 10 minutes before the first bell rings at 8.55 a.m.

UNIFORMS

Please ensure uniforms are clearly named - sunhats, socks, underwear and even goggles too.

PARENT HELPERS

There will be opportunities to be a parent helper as the term progresses. This allows time for routines to be established and testing to be completed. A note will be sent home asking for your assistance during reading / writing / numeracy and swimming times.



SOCIAL SKILLS

The skills we are primarily focusing on in class are:

1. "I" messages or statements
2. Active listening
3. Participating appropriately in the conflict resolution process

CURRICULUM FOCUS

We will begin the term unpacking the key competencies, in particular, 'managing self'.

The focus for our school wide topic for the year is "Citizenship", The school wide topic for Term 1 is "Learning to Learn/School Culture/Charism/School Citizenship.

The major curriculum foci are RE, Health & Physical Education and Key Competencies (in particular, 'Managing Self')

As this topic progresses there may be a request for resources from home.

FACEBOOK

Are you a member of Facebook? Search for *St Joseph's School, Timaru* and 'like' our page. We are using the site for notices, reminders, news snippets etc.

ULTRANET PAGE

Last year the ICT Lead team (of which I am a member) spent a large part of our Professional Development time up skilling ourselves to develop our school Ultranet page. This is a very exciting development and will contribute to improving classroom teaching and learning and communication with the wider school community. We are always looking for ways to improve this and believe this is one way of doing so. Your child will have their own login name and password. I will send home a copy of instructions explaining how to login once I have modelled this with the children. Activities and games on our class page are a great way of reinforcing and supporting classroom learning. This year we are looking at developing online portfolios of work.

Please do keep in touch.

Feel free to contact me if you have any concerns.

Megan Cahill

CLASSROOM TEACHER