Dear Families,

It is great to be back and we are looking forward to a fantastic year of learning, fun and friendship with your child. The children have all settled well into daily routines and are having a fantastic time creating co-operative class environments.

CELEBRATING LEARNING
At All Saints learning is an active and exciting process that encourages children to construct and make meaning for themselves. Children learn within a safe and stimulating environment that allows for curiosity and imagination. We celebrate the uniqueness of all children and build upon each learner’s individual needs and interests.

BRAIN FOOD
Brain food was introduced at All Saints a few years ago. It is recommended that children bring un-processed foods with no packaging to snack on whilst engaging in their learning. This can include pieces of fruit, both fresh and dried, cheese, eggs and meat. Please refrain from packing yoghurt as some brands contain high amounts of sugar and it can become messy when eating. The only acceptable drink at school is water. It is essential that your child has a bottle of water everyday - hydration is important for optimum brain function! As you can imagine trips to the drink taps are disruptive to the learning programme.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY/NUDE FOOD
As a school we are working towards environmental sustainability. Part of this is our commitment to nude food. We have many families who have embraced the idea and are keeping their children’s lunch boxes free of wrapping. We thank those families and encourage all families to think about their commitment to being stewards of the earth. Some food scraps are suitable for feeding our school chickens whilst some will need to be taken home. Eating our recess and lunch inside gives us time to discuss the importance of healthy eating and social “manners”.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY
As a class we have established classroom expectations. Positive reinforcement is our main focus. All Saints is a school that approaches bullying, harassment and conflict using a Restorative Practice Approach. This approach emphasises the importance of repairing the harm done to relationships during conflict. It creates opportunities for those involved in conflict to work together to understand, clarify and resolve the situation. This process includes active listening, facilitating dialogue, problem solving and empowering others to take responsibility for their choices and ownership of problems. The advantages of using restorative approaches include building a safer, more caring environment for the children, staff, parents/carers and the school community and a reduction in bullying and other interpersonal conflicts.
In 2015 we will continue to create an ethos of respect and responsibility as we concentrate on building positive relationships with our children. We will also encourage the children to build positive relationships with each other so that the classroom becomes a more effective teaching and learning environment and the yard becomes a happier and safer place to be.

LEARNING PROGRAM
All Saints have embraced the principles of the Reggio Emilia approach to quality teaching and learning. We have spent time transforming our classrooms into spaces that are open, inviting and encouraging to learners. An inquiry approach to learning is encouraged, valuing the children's prior knowledge and giving them the skills to develop as lifelong learners.

THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM
This year we will be planning, assessing and reporting to families using the Australian Curriculum in the following Learning Areas: Mathematics, Science, English, History, Health, Physical Education and Geography. Other subject areas are based on the South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework. We also integrate Made in the Image of God and Protective Behaviors into our learning program.

READING/SCHOOL DIARY
The children have all been given a diary. The Year 2 children will use a reading diary similar to what they used in Reception/Year One while the Year 3 children will use a school diary. Both diaries are to record reading each night. You or your child may also like to write comments about the story if you wish. Any other communication may also be written in the diary or homework books provided. The school diaries that the Year 3’s use, include some valuable links to Scripture. Please allow some time for your child to guide you through this great resource.

MORNING ROUTINES
Reading and spelling is an important part of the morning routine in the classroom. Children are encouraged to read their reader and practise their spelling words each morning. Please support your child by encouraging them to engage in these experiences as soon as they arrive in the classroom. As mentioned earlier the establishment of a routine is important and it is vital for children’s social and academic development. It promotes independence and consistency and plays a pivotal role in settling children into the routines of the day and assists in their readiness to play an active role in learning experiences.

LABELING BELONGINGS
Please ensure that ALL of your child’s belongings are clearly labeled with your child’s first and last name, particularly hats and jumpers as these are taken off regularly. Art smocks, drink bottles and lunch boxes also need to be labeled.
SUN SAFETY
As part of the Sun Protection policy, children are expected to wear the designated school hat when they are outside. If a child does not have a hat they must sit on the bench outside of the staff room during playtime, except for during the winter months. NO HAT – NO PLAY.

HOMEWORK GRID
Classes from 2-7 use the homework grid. The homework grid will offer a broad range of after school experiences and a combination of compulsory and optional activities. The experiences outlined in the homework grid are designed to support children to balance their learning time with family time, time to develop their physical health and to encourage the pursuit of special interests and hobbies. We believe the homework grid is a positive and valuable step in supporting our children as lifelong learners. Mark Le Messurier & Ian Lillico both have websites that encourage the use of homework grids. You might like to Google these names for further information.

DAYS TO REMEMBER
Newsletter Day - THURSDAY (fortnightly, available online)
Library Borrowing – WEDNESDAY
Sports Day (children must wear their sport uniform to school, only on these specified days) – TUESDAY & FRIDAY
Assemblies are held most weeks at 9:15 in the SCHOOL HALL – FRIDAY
Reading book, spelling words and reading diary - EVERY DAY

INDEPENDENCE DAY – FRIDAYS
We would like to see all children arriving at school independently on Fridays. This means dropping your child at the gate or the loop from 8.30am and allowing them to get themselves organised for the day. We welcome your attendance at our Friday assembly and ask that you wait over at the school hall. We thank you for your support in this matter.

UNIFORM
Please ensure your child is in correct uniform daily. Any problems please send a note with your child in their diary. Remember to keep the bling for the weekend eg: jewellery and fancy hair ties. Hair ties must be in school colours. Please refer to the school website to review the Uniform Policy.
ARRIVAL TIMES/ABSENTEES

- Arrival time is 8:45 where children will engage in their morning routine. Any time after 8:55am (second bell) children will require a late slip from the office prior to entering the classroom.
- If for any circumstances your child will be late or absent from school, please contact the school.
- Notes of explanation, or personal notification, are required when your child is late or absent from school. You can use the school’s SMS number to text your child’s absence on 0427 016 460.
- On arrival each morning children are expected to:
  1. Carry their own school bag and place their bag (zipped up) correctly on the bag rack located outside of the classroom.
  2. Bring their reading folder containing reading books, reading diary, spelling notes, bank books, etc. into the class themselves and put them into the appropriate places.
  3. Place drink bottle in designated area.

Please allow your children to develop responsibility and independence by letting them choose their own reader and follow through with the morning routine on their own. The establishment of a routine is important and it is vital for children’s social and academic development that they are at school on time. In the event that your child is late for school, please encourage them to come in quietly so that class time is not interrupted. Thank you.

CLASS NECESSITIES

Please ensure that your child has an art smock and a library bag. Children are unable to borrow from the library without a library bag or alternatively their reading folders. Reading every night is also expected and this must be recorded in your child’s reading diary.

It would also be a great help if each child could bring a box of tissues to class (if they haven’t already done so). If you have any appropriate magazines or natural resources such as pine cones, bread tags, corks that we could use for construction, these would also be greatly appreciated.

SPECIALIST LESSONS

We are fortunate to have three specialist teachers this year:
Italian – Martino Vaudo
Science – Bill Giles
PARENT/CARER INVOLVEMENT

Parents/carers are welcome to participate in classroom activities if they are a registered volunteer. If you are interested in becoming a registered volunteer please see the front office to complete this process. The teachers would be delighted to discuss with you ways and times in which you can be involved. For example, assistance with reading groups (from approximately 9:00–9:50), excursions, Art & Craft, making games for the classroom or any activities that you would like to share with us. All registered volunteers intending to stay and assist in the class after 9:15am must sign in and receive a badge from the front office for security purposes.

It would be helpful if parents/carers do not enter the classroom during lesson time (especially at the end of the day), unless previously arranged with the teacher, as this can cause distractions for the children. The end of the day is a time where we settle children and reflect on the day’s successes/challenges.

It is important that your child select their own reader and read to an adult each night. The children must fill in their reader diary each night and it needs to be signed by the supervising adult. It is important for parents and teachers to work together and actively support and encourage children to enjoy the challenge of learning.

AFTER SCHOOL DISCUSSIONS

Most days after school we have professional meetings and after school duties to attend to. If you would like a discussion other than a brief chat or question, it is important that you make a mutually agreed appointment to discuss any issues. We would be happy to assist in any way.

We would also appreciate parents/carers discussing any concerns they have about their child’s progress, or happiness at school, as soon as possible. Sometimes minor problems can escalate if they are left unresolved or discussed with others not directly involved.

An alternative way to contact class teachers regarding any issues can be via email. My email address is: spartridge@allsaints.catholic.edu.au

Many Thanks,

Junior Primary Teachers.