Dear parents and carers,

Welcome back to the new school year, we hope you had an enjoyable holiday. We would also like to take this opportunity to welcome new children and their families, and hope you are all settling in well.

A very warm welcome to our new Junior teaching staff:: Miss Vicki Shorthouse, Miss Jasmine Giles and Mrs Jessica Lipscombe. Mrs Sue McNamara also joins the Junior School team and we look forward to sharing her valuable expertise and input.

The Junior School comprises 9 classes and they are:

- J1S  Vicki Shorthouse
- J2B  Tara Butler
- J3P  Kate Pickburn and Anne Robins
- J4C  Emma Chalmers
- J5L  Jessica Lipscombe
- J6J  Sarah John
- J7G  Jasmine Giles
- J8L  Jen Lenten
- J9O  Michael O’Donovan

Mrs Maria Pase and Mrs Sue McNamara are also working within the Junior School as team leaders and mentors to the teaching staff.

Our UNIT OF INQUIRY this term and our UNDERSTANDINGS

In Term 1, the children will investigate

‘How do we learn best?’

This unit will complement and reinforce Roberts McCubbin Primary School’s Beliefs and Understandings and support the objectives in our Safe and Happy Book. We will distribute these books soon and ask that you keep your copy in an accessible place so you and your child can refer to it easily.

Our Understandings for “How do we learn best?”:

- We are responsible for our own learning
- We are a community of learners
- We acknowledge people learn differently
- We are life long learners
LITERACY

Our Literacy goals this term will, depending on each child’s developmental level, focus on developing your child’s skills in the areas of handwriting, punctuation, spelling strategies, editing, paragraphing and correct use of upper and lower case letters. Some children will be taking risks in learning the names of letters and their associated sounds, some will focus on correct letter formation, whilst others will need to extend their knowledge of specific blends and spelling of new words. We will practise writing recounts that are either personal or factual with an emphasis on some children taking risks and having a go. The children will also have the opportunity to write narratives and will be exposed to a variety of selected narratives as part of our whole school Literacy focus on Picture Story books during Term 1.

ONLINE INTERVIEWS and ASSESSMENT

During Term 1 we will be conducting the English Online Interview and the Numeracy Online Interview, which assesses the English and Mathematical skills of our junior students. The English Interview assesses students across the three dimensions of VELS: Speaking & Listening, Reading and Writing. The English Online Interview forms part of a state-wide assessment program. The Numeracy Interview assesses students in the areas of counting, place value, addition/subtraction and multiplication/division.

In Term 1 all Prep students will participate in the English On Line interview with their teacher. This assessment is mandatory for all students in their first year at school and covers specific areas such as letter identification, matching letters to sounds, rhyming words and patterns, reading and comprehension as well as assessing knowledge about writing.

The students in their second and third year at school will continually be monitored and assessed in areas of English with an emphasis on reading, comprehension, spelling, dictation and writing. Because some of these assessments are conducted on a 1:1 basis, class teachers need to be released for a few days during the first month of school.

Reading/Homework

As part of our partnership with parents it is an expectation that all parents/carers continue to take an interest in their child’s reading by listening to and sharing the take home book each night and ensuring that the reading log is signed each night. This can involve making predictions about the text and retelling the story. Please also ensure that the reading time is fun and enjoyable. Teachers will remind the children each day about the need to change their book to take home and share.

NUMERACY

This term in Numeracy we are focusing on different aspects of number, like, counting, ordinal number, place value, addition, subtraction, patterns, and graphing.

Numeracy Interviews will be starting in late February and March. All children from Prep to grade 2 will be interviewed individually and assessed.

Mathletics is continuing again for 2013. It is a computer based program which helps build on mathematical skills and concepts. Please be on the look out for your child’s personalised password to access this program.

HOW YOU CAN BE INVOLVED THIS TERM:

Parents are warmly welcome to assist in the classroom during the morning program starting at 9am till recess. Please be on the look out for the relevant roster form posted on our Junior School noticeboard located in the Junior School foyer or ask your child’s teacher. Rosters will be available from around Week 3 of term.
Specialist Lessons
The Junior School will continue to have a range of specialist programs with each lesson running for an hour. The timetable will operate on a Week 1 or Week 2 basis. Each week your child will attend an Art session, a Performing Arts session and two Physical Education/Sports sessions. As well as the above specialist classes, each child will access a Library session one week and the following week a Science/Robotics session. Your child’s class teacher will confirm the day your child attends these specialist programs and a class timetable will be sent home. Your child will need a Library bag for their Library session and an Art smock. Please ensure that all items are clearly labelled with your child’s full name.

Sustainability
We are a Waste Wise / Sustainable School and we can continue to reduce the amount of rubbish around our school by decreasing the amount of packaging in students’ lunchboxes. Wrappers will be taken home in lunch boxes and students are being encouraged to be very responsible and bring food along to school in named, reusable containers. Thank you for your efforts and please keep up the good work!

Sun Smart
As you are aware, our school policy states that Sun Smart hats must be worn during Term 1. Please ensure that your child remembers to bring their named hat and drink bottle to school each day. We also strongly suggest that sunscreen is applied each morning before your child comes to school. A ‘no hat, no play’ policy applies.

Canteen
The canteen will not operate in Term 1 and we ask that you refer to our school newsletter or website for further updates.

Banking
Banking will continue to run on Tuesdays and all new students will be provided with an information pack from the Commonwealth Bank sometime in the near future.

Other reminders:
- Ensure children’s belongings are clearly labelled
- Provide your child with a healthy lunch and snack
- Remember that they may not manage to eat all their lunch, although we will encourage them to finish as much a possible
- Provide a water bottle with secure lid (no glass bottles or cans)
- Provide 2 boxes of tissues which can be handed to your child’s teacher
- Donations of dress up materials

HEAD LICE
We would ask that you are vigilant about checking your child’s hair for head lice and ensure it is treated effectively. It is greatly appreciated by other parents who do take the time to ensure that your child’s learning time is not continually disrupted with head checks.
PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION
All parents/carers are required to communicate in writing any explanations regarding child absences and planned holidays, as this is a legal Departmental requirement.

Please take the opportunity to visit the Junior School foyer to view updated information and PFA information.

Please check for a notice that will be sent home to Parents of beginning children, so that you can meet and talk to your child's class teacher about any concerns and issues. These meetings are usually conducted on one of the afternoons in February. Please look out for this notice and pop your name against a suitable timeslot.

Parents of children in years 1 and 2 will have the opportunity to meet their child’s class teacher on Tuesday March 5th, for a short informal meeting. This is an ideal opportunity to discuss your child’s ILP (Individual Learning Plan). Your child’s teacher will keep you informed.

The beginning children will begin full time from 9 till 3:30 on Monday 25th February.
A reminder that the 8.50am bell is the time when we come into our classrooms so we can organise the things we need for the day. We would appreciate all children being here at this time so we can all start our work together on time. Adjusting to a new school routine can be daunting for some new students and we encourage your child to develop their skills in unpacking their bag, putting their take home folder into the appropriate box and any other requirements.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

January 29, 30 and 31  Curriculum Days
1 February  Year 1-6 students commence
4 February  Preps commence at 9:30-1:1:40
5-22 February  Preps 9:00-1:40
15 February  Classroom Helpers Program: Session 1
18 February  Information Evening
22 February  Classroom Helpers Program: Session 2
25 February  All students 9-3:30
28 February  School Picnic
5 March  Parent/Teacher Meetings for students Year 1-6
6 March  Education Committee Meeting
11 March  Public Holiday
15 March  Helping Your Child Learn To Read: Session 1
18 March  Planning Week and Multicultural Diversity Week
22 March  Helping Your Child Learn To Read: Session 2
28 March  Last day of Term1: 2:30 Dismissal
31 March  Easter Sunday
15 April  Term 2

From the fabulous Robbie Mac Junior School Team.
We hope you all have a productive first term.