Dear Parents,
Each term we will send home information about the learning experiences your child will be involved in during the term in English, Maths and Integrated Studies.

Writing
The genre we will be focusing on this term is **RECOUNTS**. Recounts describe past experiences by retelling events in the order in which they happened. It aims to inform and entertain the reader. Recounts include biographies, diaries, newspaper articles and postcards. This type of writing usually follows a set structure which will be explored with the students.

**Focus areas in writing will include:**
- Verbalising what they would like to write and recording the prominent sounds they can hear in the words they are writing.
- Using a picture plan – Thinking about what I will write and recording these ideas through pictures.
- Developing an understanding that writing communicates ideas.
- Developing an understanding of the concepts about print, for example, they write from the left to right side of the page and from top to bottom.
- Leaving a space between words.
- Reading what they have written at the time of writing.
- Using correct pencil grip and correct posture when writing.
- Developing correct letter formation by using the correct entry and exit points.

**Spelling:**
Identifying spelling strategies and how they help to learn words.

**The 3 main strategies are:**
The Sound Strategy – using your knowledge of sounds and sound patterns
The Visual Strategy – using the way a word looks, breaking words up, remembering tricky parts
The Meaning Strategy – being able to think about the meaning of a word, what we know about words

**Onset and Rime:**
The students will develop an understanding of onset and rime. Onset and rime can greatly improve both reading and spelling skills. Onset is the beginning sound of a word and allows them to create new words with familiar endings. Learning to distinguish rime (a combination of letters and the accompanying sound they make, such as ‘an’ or ‘ot’) gives the students a valuable tool that provides quick access to spelling patterns.

**Rhyming Words:**
We will be using poetry to engage the students in rhyming. Rhyme is an effective way of teaching students how to spell. They will be exploring different rhyming/spelling patterns, which will help increase their knowledge and understanding of spelling unfamiliar words.

**High Frequency Words**
These are words which are used most frequently in your child’s reading and writing. The spelling of these words needs to become automatic. Students will be involved in activities to support their learning of these words at school and they will also be a focus for homework.
Reading
Students will be engaged in reading a variety of recounts to further support their understanding of the recount structure. They will participate in a **Whole Class Focus** (10-15 minutes) in which they will be taught a focus from the list below. They will then be given an opportunity to practise what they have just been taught during the whole class focus through their **Independent Reading** session (10-15 minutes). After independent reading, the students will share their learning, understandings or questions with the class during the **Share and Reflection** session (5-10 minutes). They’ll then break in to like need groups to participate in **Personalised Reading Tasks** (20 minutes) that caters for their individual needs. The reading session is finished off with a final **Share and Reflection** session.

**Focus areas in reading will include:**
- Using the 7 decoding strategies – Look at the picture, Get your mouth ready, Re-reading, Does it look right? Does it sound right? Does it make sense? And looking for chunks.
- Identifying the features of a text.
- Identifying what is a letter, word and sentence.

**Comprehension Strategies:**
- Understanding the print contains a message
- Asking and answering literal questions.
- Predicting what will happen at the beginning, middle and end of a story.
- Retelling in sequence what happened in the text.
- Making connections – Text to self, text to text and text to world.

**Independent Reading:**
The students will participate in daily Independent Reading sessions. They will be involved in developing their classroom libraries, to ensure that it contains a variety of text types, such as fiction, non-fiction, poetry, etc. and that the topics appeal to the individual interests of the grade. Each student will have a collection of 5 to 6 books to read during independent reading time. Students will spend their time during independent reading sessions practising their individual reading goal.
Maths
Students will participate in five, 1 hour maths sessions a week. Prep students relate mathematical activity to themselves and their immediate environment. They learn by using concrete materials and developing links between everyday language and mathematical activity. Learning activities will allow the students to explore mathematical ideas in a range of situations and begin to use mathematical language.

Focus areas in Maths will include:
- Counting using 1:1 correspondence and counting forwards and backwards
- Connecting number names, numerals and quantities, including zero, initially up to 10 and then beyond.
- Building numbers on the tens frame
- Creating and continuing a pattern, for example, blue teddy, blue teddy, green teddy, blue teddy, blue teddy, green teddy.
- Describing a position or movement, for example, in front of, behind, next to, over, beside.
- Using ordinal language to identify position, for example, the teddy is first, the ball is third.
- Sorting describing and naming two dimensional shapes.

INTEGRATED STUDIES
The students in Prep will study a different Integrated Topic each term. The topic for term one is “Marvellous Me” and as the name suggests, the focus is on the child, and getting to know them and their school community.

During this unit the children will address questions such as:
What is a family?
What makes me special and unique?
What makes me an individual and how am I special?
How do my feelings affect others?
What are my talents and strengths?

The children thoroughly enjoy this unit as it allows them to further understand and develop both themselves as individuals and as a member of a team.

YOU CAN DO IT!
Making new friends at school can be challenging and sometimes daunting for children. ‘You Can Do It!’ is a program that we use at Altona Primary School to assist students in their social and emotional development.

During Term one, all Prep children will be introduced to the 5 Keys to Life; organisation, persistence, getting along, confidence, resilience, as a part of our You Can Do It! Program. To assist in learning these 5 Keys to Life, we use character hand puppets; Gabby Get Along, Pete Persistence, Oscar Organise, Connie Confidence and Ricky Resilience. Along with the modeling and encouraging that these characters provide and the classroom activities the students learn invaluable life skills.

We look forward to a wonderful year working with your children.
Thank you for your support.
Prep Team - Christina Sakellarides, Joanne Mathrick, Shonelle Kent and Tammie Thompson