What a wonderful beginning we have had to the school year. All children have settled in to the start of their school life remarkably well. There has been much laughter and enjoyment in our classrooms, and we are thrilled with the way your children have made the transition from Pre-School to School. There is always something exciting happening in Prep, so we will keep you updated throughout the year via special Prep Newsletters.

Please check your child's bag every night for any notices sent home. The children put all notices into their red ‘Notice Folder’ and need to return the folder on the following day.

The children have started to participate in Art, Physical Education, Science, Music, Library and Computer lessons. These classes are held weekly as follows:

- **Monday** — Music, Physical Education (PA), Buddies (fortnightly)
- **Wednesday** — Art, Physical Education (PB)
- **Thursday** — Library, Indonesian, Science, Computers/ iPads
- **Friday** — Friday Fitness, Computers

All children are required to have an Art smock, a Library bag and suitable shoes for Physical Education. Library bags will come home with a library book in them on or soon after your child's library session. Books need to be returned before a new book can be borrowed. Library books cannot be borrowed without a library bag.

**READING WITH YOUR CHILD**

So far this year we have been focussing on socialisation and becoming familiar with classroom routines. We are also getting ready for reading. "Well," you might ask, "how are you doing this when you aren't sending readers home with them yet?"

In the classroom we have been providing lots of activities which develop awareness of sounds. We have been using rhymes and other such activities as tools. The children are engaged in learning the letters of the alphabet. Once children are proficient in identifying the sounds and learning the letters, they will be moving on to activities that develop Phonological Awareness when they will learn which letters and letter combinations are associated with the sounds they hear in words.

Our aim is to develop a strong, solid base for your child's literacy learning. Consequently we shall not be moving on to 'readers' until we believe the children are ready for them. In the mean time we will be sending home no-text books. These books provide a wonderful opportunity for children to develop their oral language. Look at the books with your child and describe different things on each page.
Encourage them to give lots of detail—you can lead by example! E.g. “There is a boy” OR “There is a tall boy wearing blue jeans and a huge red hat.” This is a great way to expand their vocabulary. You can also make up your own storylines to match the illustrations.

How can you help your children’s literacy learning? The best way is to read to them every day and to let them see you reading. Let them see that reading is an enjoyable activity. Let them see you writing—get them to help you write your shopping list—talk to them about what you need, talk to them about what you are writing, let them see that the written word is associated with the spoken word. Help them to develop a wide speaking vocabulary so that they can transfer this to their reading and writing vocabulary once this is needed. When you are reading to them, talk to them about the words and letters on the page so that they can become proficient in using these words. Ask them to find any letters they may recognise, but do not force the issue if they do not want to do so—it is to be expected that there will be times when they are tired and just want the enjoyment of being read to. They work very hard in school—even ‘playing’ is hard work!

**NUMERACY**

As well as developing their literacy skills we have been doing lots of counting activities and have started introducing numbers. You can help your children at home by involving them in mathematical activities and talking to them about mathematics and its everyday uses. Be positive! Praise your child’s success. Encourage your child to have a go at measuring, calculating, counting, estimating and solving problems. Invite your child to investigate and make discoveries for themselves. Encourage them to find their own answers. Don’t be too quick to tell them the answers. We will be using a blue Homework Folder this year. Please return it to school each Friday so we can send home new maths activities that relate to what we have been learning in the classroom.

**PARENT HELPERS**

Before parents can listen to reading or help in their child’s grade it is necessary to attend a compulsory privacy briefing. The briefing will be held with Ms Braakhuis once the children are at school full time. All parent helpers must also have a Working with Children card, which can be applied for online and is free of charge for volunteers. Please see the office if you require more information about this.

**I’M A BIG KID NOW**

This term the Prep grades will be developing an understanding of our school community. Our Integrated topic, ‘I’m a Big Kid Now’ gives the children opportunities to explore the school surroundings and learn about important people and places in the school. We talk about how to stay safe at school and how we can look after our school resources and environment. We also provide time for the children to get to know one another and give them strategies to deal with a range of social situations, such as asking a new friend to play. We discuss events and holidays celebrated by students and all children will have the opportunity to bring in a family photo to share with the grade later in the term.
ANAPHYLAXIS

Seaford Park School Council has approved an updated Anaphylaxis Policy. Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction to a substance, most commonly nuts, egg, milk, wheat, soy, seafood, some insect stings and medications. We are asking that children, parents and staff reduce the risk of children who suffer from Anaphylaxis by not bringing Nuts or Nut products to school. Posters have been placed around the school to promote this.

ART

In Art sessions the focus will be on developing the children’s knowledge of colours with a focus on both primary and secondary colours. They will participate in a variety of lessons exploring shades of colour and practice mixing different paint combinations. Later sessions will incorporate the integrated topic ‘I’m a big kid now’. Connections will be made to literacy through picture stories and song.

MUSIC

During Term 1 students will explore the use of sound, making a variety of sounds with their bodies and formal instruments. Emphasis will be placed on creating and maintaining steady beats when using drums and rhythm sticks, participating in call and response songs and moving safely around the room. Students will be encouraged to engage in activities and most importantly have fun!

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

This term Physical Education will focus on developing the children’s fundamental motor skills of throwing, catching, running, jumping and leaping. Students will participate in a variety of minor games, a hockey clinic and PMP activities promoting the children’s enjoyment of physical activity and co-operation. A major focus will be listening to and following instructions and staying within the boundaries of games and activities. Students will also have the opportunity to develop their fitness by participating in Kilometre Club at lunchtime on Wednesdays.

SCIENCE

Welcome to Science! This term Prep students will be learning what a ‘scientist’ is. We will conduct simple and fun experiments to engage their interest in this area. Students will study the topic ‘I’m a big kid now’ to learn the importance of asking questions, experimenting and observing. They will learn different ways to record their findings to form an analysis. Preps will be introduced to our school veggie garden and learning all about what Sustainability means, what we do at Seaford Park and why it is important. I can’t wait to show them our Worm Farm!

PREP NEWS

Each Friday the children will bring home ‘Prep News’. This includes information about what we have been learning at school and provides an opportunity for you to reinforce these concepts at home. Revising our sound chants and reading sight words at home on a regular basis is very important and will help your child when we begin reading books with text. Prep News will come home in the blue homework folder. You will also find important resources in this folder that will enable you to complete the maths activities. Please take care of these resource cards and return them at the end of the year. These cards will be re-used next year.

We are looking forward to teaching your children and working with you to help them enjoy a happy and rewarding school year.

Jane Bennett and Carrie Wilson