Welcome back to all families to the 2015 school year.

Hopefully everyone had an enjoyable and relaxing holiday break. It is wonderful to see the children return in readiness for a new school year.

The Newsletter will continue to be sent out every Wednesday as in previous years but I wanted to inform you of a few necessary items in between.

I would like to welcome all staff on their return plus two new staff members to our staff team and 4 returning staff members. New staff additions are Miss Sophie Williams who is teaching in Grade 5/6 and Stacey Michell is teaching in Grade 1/2 sharing a classroom with Natalie Pelly who has returned from Family leave. Mrs Kylie Gould has also returned from leave and is sharing a 1/2 class with Jo Bergin. Mrs Jackson has returned following her Acting Principal stint at Marong PS at the end of 2014 and some families will remember Craig Barker who taught for many years at Speci. Craig has returned to conduct the school’s circus program every Wednesday which is something that we are all looking forward to. All other staff are back on board for another wonderful year of Teaching and Learning.

Unfortunately the school found out on the last day of school in 2014 that we were unsuccessful in securing further funding to support our Wellbeing Program through the National Chaplaincy Program for the next 3 years. This was extremely disappointing and the impact is that Bernadette Wright our Wellbeing Officer will only be working for 3 days a week throughout the year. But Bernadette will still conduct the Speci Wellbeing Program in classes as usual but we have had to stream-line other programs. Bernadette is still available to catch up with students and families and Corey and Di are also available.

If your family circumstances have changed over the holidays or you have more current court documentation please make sure that you let us know as soon as possible.

All families need to update the school on changes of address, phone numbers or changes to any contact person. Can you please do so ASAP as all students need to have a contactable number at all times.

Grade 5/6 camp is coming up very quickly. A notice will be sent home today in relation to dates and costs involved, this is a similar notice that was sent home to all students at the end of last year. There is only a short timeline between when the payments are due - Friday 20th Feb and when the students attend the camp on Wed 4th, Thurs 5th and Friday 6th March.

Family Meet and Greet the teacher interviews will be held on Thursday 26th February. More information to follow.

Playgroup will start next Thursday on Thursday 5th February from 9.00 till 10.45 and will be held in the Multi Purpose Room.

The canteen will re-start on Monday 9th Feb.

Preps will have a ‘rest’ day every Wednesday during February and also two further Wednesdays on Wednesday 11th March and 25th March.

There will be an extra ordinary School Council meeting on Monday 2nd Feb to be held in the Staff room. This will be a short meeting to discuss a key matter.

As you are aware there is no longer EMA funding granted to Health Care holder families. The school procedures in relation to this are highlighted on the notice accompanying the Newsletter. Please read it thoroughly as it outlines the excursions and costs and any payments for the year.
I am very pleased to say that we are starting the year with 282 students, similar to last year. It was a delight to walk around the school this morning to see that almost all children have settled into their new classes and are looking forward to the challenge of a new year. All students have received their new requisites and are delighting in naming their books, pencils etc.

As Term 1 is a SunSmart term, all students are required to wear a school hat whenever they are outside. Hats are available from the office for $12 each.

February is always a very hot month and all families should be reviewing their home Bushfire and Fire Emergency Plans. Home Emergency plans that were current over the holiday period will have changed now that the children are back at school and now that parents may have returned to work. Please talk to your child/children in relation to the updated plan.

A reminder that children should have a healthy lunch every day. Soft drinks, cordial and lollies are banned from lunches. All students should have a drink bottle (named) containing water to be sipped throughout the day. If children come to school without lunch there are lunches available.

Unfortunately there is a hold-up with the Class of 2015 Grade 6 uniforms. These won’t be available for another couple of weeks. We apologise for any inconvenience.

All students require a clean, named art smock and a Library bag to start the year.

Returning to school means back to regular reading routines, reading at least 5 nights per week. Every child will bring home a new take home book tonight. Can you make sure that this is read and that the child’s diary is also signed off every night please. Building up the reading miles assists improvement across all literacy areas.

If you have any concerns please do not hesitate to contact me through a phone call or by appointment.

Looking forward to a great year of learning, friendship and growth for all.

Di Craig
Principal