Dear Parents and Carers,

It is my joy to be teaching 1M this year. They are a delightful group who have come together from two different classes, as well as one student new to our school. We are already settling in nicely and getting to know each other better every day.

It is my focus to create a positive, child-centred classroom where all children feel equally and unconditionally valued and important. I feel that only then can each child achieve his or her amazing potential. Children being children need lots of positive attention and constant reassurance to build their self-esteem. They need to be surrounded by people who believe in them so that they may begin to believe in themselves. I try to surround the children with a variety of engaging resources and activities based on their interests that will stimulate effective teaching and learning and help them to realise their own unique talents and strengths.

In keeping with our school’s core values of Responsible, Respectful, Safe Learners, I encourage all the children to be good friends together (leaving no-one out) both in the classroom and in the playground by:
• caring about each other (not just themselves)
• being kind and thoughtful to each other
• listening to each other properly
• looking after each other
• helping each other
• respecting each others’ uniqueness as well as their property and rights
• being responsible for their own learning and behaviour
• encouraging each other to be the best they can be.

I strive to assist the children to approach any problems in a positive way and solve them with kindness and understanding for everyone.

Class activities are designed to be open ended so that each child can complete the work at their own level.

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**Homework**

I believe the best “homework” you can do with your child is to share quality time together. It might be as simple as being interested in each other’s day, talking and listening to each other, letting them know that what they are doing is important to you, doing the gardening, going for a walk, preparing a meal or sharing a story.

I hope our class homework routine will be an opportunity for you to encourage and support your child in their endeavours as well as a positive, shared experience. I ask the children to bring in their homework each day (as set out below) and those who do are in the draw for prizes each Friday.
Home Reading
As you are aware, reading is one of the most important activities in which your child will engage this year as it plays a vital role in all the other Key Learning Areas and, as such, it will receive the highest priority on a daily basis in our classroom. It is essential for your child’s success in this area that these efforts are then followed up at home by encouraging and supporting their participation in the daily home reading program. Reading time should be a positive, shared experience for both you and your child.
Each child will bring home a reader at their appropriate level Monday to Thursday, which they are asked to read each night to build up their confidence, fluency, comprehension and expression. They may exchange it on Mondays and Wednesdays if they are able to read the whole book confidently and fluently. It is very important to read it several times. I have asked them to return it each day with the record sheet completed and signed for monitoring until they have mastered it. Your comments will help. Due to the number of home readers that have gone missing in the past, we are all asked to be more diligent in taking care of these valuable resources. Should your home reader go missing, you will be asked to pay for a replacement at a cost of $8.
Each day that the children bring their reading record sheet in signed by you, they will receive a star on our home reading graph. On Fridays, all children who have earned four stars for reading four nights that week will receive a ticket in our homework raffle. They can also earn a second ticket for completing all four pieces of written homework for the week as outlined below.

One idea to improve fluency is to time your child reading for one minute. Count and record the number of words read. Then repeat the process reading the same text to see if they can improve on their first score.

Another great way to give your child extra practice is to turn the subtitles on next time they are watching their favourite DVD and read along. They can even “test” themselves by muting it and seeing how much they can read.

Interacting with the text is an effective way to improve your child’s comprehension. Discuss the story with them - their favourite part and why, main ideas, messages, meaning, responses to characters, and predictions etc. In this way you can encourage your child to be a more insightful reader. Expression is improved by modeling and attention to punctuation.

We need you!
Please consider volunteering to support our home reading program any morning you are available. Your assistance is highly valued and appreciated.

Our Homework Schedule
Monday
1. Reading: around 15 minutes. Please sign and return the record sheet daily.
2. Personal recount (journal): at least 4 sentences about what you have been doing outside school, including a picture. Please use a title and date. (To be handed in each Tuesday morning.)

Tuesday
1. Reading: as for Monday.
2. Handwriting: A page from your text book. (To be handed in each Wednesday morning.)

Wednesday
1. Reading: as for Monday.
2. Maths: a maths activity to consolidate class work. (To be handed in each Thursday morning.)

Thursday
1. Reading: as for Monday.
2. Consolidation of daily spelling or language enrichment activity. (To be presented each Friday morning.)

Special Days to Note:
- Monday: Library, fitness
- Tuesday: Scripture and computer
- Wednesday: Assembly - 2.10pm on alternating weeks. Parents and families welcome.
- Thursday: Swimming
- Friday: Sport

**IM Topic talks (Please see attached schedule)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cameron</td>
<td>Natalia</td>
<td>Chanae</td>
<td>Ricky</td>
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<td>Freja</td>
<td>Maddison</td>
<td>Stella</td>
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<td>Kimaira</td>
<td>Ava</td>
<td>Levi</td>
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<td>Lily</td>
<td>Campbell</td>
<td>Jacob</td>
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<td>Jayden</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Joshua</td>
<td>Jenna</td>
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**Oral Presentation**

***In keeping with our major goal of respecting each others’ uniqueness, the children are asked to prepare a talk about themselves for their topic talk next week.***

This should include information about:
1. Their family, country of origin, culture and language. (If your child, yourself and even grandparents were born in Australia, it is important for them to understand that, at some time in the past, their family came to live in Australia from another country and to know where that was – unless they are indigenous.) Each child is encouraged to feel proud of their heritage, and languages other than English will be highlighted.
2. Their special talents.
3. Their interests and hobbies.
4. Their favourite things. (To do, places to go, people to visit, games, foods, etc.)

Please help your child to outline this presentation as their ‘personal recount’ to be written in their homework book for next Monday’s homework.

**Literacy**

IM will be engaged in *Accelerated Literacy* this term. The whole class will focus on studying one text for a minimum of three weeks to develop deep knowledge about vocabulary and grammatical features, and deep understanding of literate discourse and the writer’s intentionality. Activities will include writing workshops to analyse how writers write and practise writing like a writer.

This pedagogy thoroughly addresses all syllabus outcomes and all aspects of the quality teaching framework.

In addition, students participate in **Focus Literacy Groups implementing L3 strategies**, aimed at developing fluent, expressive reading and comprehension of guided readers in a small group of a similar level. Opportunity is also provided for sustained independent reading for pleasure.

We implement the **“Ants in the Apple”** spelling and language program.
Our focus this term is **Imaginative writing** whereby students are exposed to many examples of language rich, imaginary texts, contribute to joint constructions in a guided setting, and begin to experiment with modelled devices to enhance their independent writing.

**COG (Connected Outcomes Group)**
This term our COG theme is "Understanding Ourselves". The focus is on understanding how cultural diversity influences our beliefs, values and connection to place and people. This will be expressed through objects, songs, dances and stories. Your contribution is vital.

**Numeracy**
“Count Me In Too” and TEN will continue to form the basis of our maths programme. Our maths lessons will be at a set time every day and extra support will be provided where needed. All elements of maths will be treated using a hands on approach and differentiated activities where appropriate.

**Best Practice**
All students are asked to arrive on time each day with all the necessary equipment to maximise their learning opportunities, including: a fresh bottle of water, fruit, healthy lunch, two sharp pencils, home reader, written homework component, perhaps library books and swimming gear. Your support with this organisation is vital.

You are very welcome to visit our classroom and see the things we are doing. Please don’t hesitate to contact me to make a time to discuss your child’s progress if you wish. Afternoons are best. I am very committed to your child having a happy and successful year.

Thank you for your support and encouragement.

Yours sincerely,
Jo-anne Morrissey

**2014 JM Topic Talks**

**Term 1**
Week 4 – All about yourself (as per outline)
Week 5 – An Australian animal
Week 6 – An Australian bird
Week 7 – A spider
Week 8 – An Australian flower
Week 9 – Australia
Week 10 – A different country
Week 11 – Free choice
**Term 2**
Week 2 – A reptile
Week 3 – A nocturnal creature
Week 4 – A dinosaur
Week 5 – A life-cycle
Week 6 – Our planet Earth
Week 7 – A different planet
Week 8 – Space
Week 9 – An insect

**Term 3**
Week 2 – A natural disaster
Week 3 – How something works
Week 4 – Under the sea
Week 5 – Things that fly
Week 6 – Trees
Week 7 – The Polar Caps
Week 8 – A different country
Week 9 – A fish
Week 10 – Aboriginal culture

**Term 4**
Week 2 – An amphibian
Week 3 – A sport
Week 4 – Something you have made
Week 5 – An interesting animal
Week 6 – A wonder of the world
Week 7 – What you would like to be when you grow up – why?
Week 8 – Your Christmas wish
Week 9 – Free choice