Welcome Foundation Families!

This is the first of our occasional newsletters to inform you of happenings in the Foundation classes.

We hope that you agree that it has been a fantastic start to 2016. Thankyou for your support in settling your child into their class and for assisting teachers in establishing classroom routines that have set the ground work for the fabulous year of learning and inquiry that lies ahead.

Welcome from our Assistant Principal - Christian Smith

Welcome to Foundation (Prep), the first step along the journey of primary schooling. My name is Christian Smith and I love working at Torquay College. I am one of two Assistant Principal’s – my main role is to lead and manage the Foundation, Year 1 and Year 2 programs. I have enjoyed getting around to each classroom to see all students settling into their new learning environments and routines. The Foundation teachers strive to provide a stimulating program for all students and we look forward to an exciting and rewarding year working alongside you. If you have any questions or queries, please contact your child’s teacher, Mr Brown (Team Leader) or myself. Enjoy this wonderful year with your child as they grow, discover, explore and develop in so many ways.

A few words from our Team Leader - Josh Brown

Wow, what an amazing start to the year we have had! The children are so settled and have had a smooth transition in to school, it has been fantastic to see! Congratulations to all families, and thank you for your support of not only your children, but of the teaching staff. As a new teacher to the school, I could not be any more impressed by the professionalism and outstanding knowledge of the members of the Foundation team. I can assure you, your children are in VERY good hands. The whole school community has been so welcoming and I am very excited about the year ahead. If you have any concerns or queries please don’t hesitate to contact either myself, Christian or your child’s teacher.

The Foundation Team-

Josh Brown C1, Kate O’Neill C2, Elizabeth Rodgers C3, Jessica Higgins C4, Janelle Polwarth C5, Darcy Hansen C6, Sally Rantall C7

CLASSROOM TIMES

Children are not expected at school before 8.15 unless they are at Out of School Hour Care.

Doors will open at 8.15 and classes begin at 8.30am. When dropping your child off in the morning and collecting your child after school we ask that you continue to access the outside doors to the classroom and empower your child to be in control of their own belongings. Parents are welcome to join us at assembly on Fridays starting at 2.30pm. Foundation students will attend their first assembly on Friday the 19th of February.

SOME REMINDERS

HATS It’s great to see so many hats on heads! Hats at Torquay College are compulsory from 1st September until 30th April and students are to wear hats at all times when outside and when attending sport and excursions. We have a NO HAT—NO PLAY policy at school. Please ensure your child’s hat is labelled with their name and grade to ensure swift return when misplaced. Please ensure that all items brought to school and worn to school are labelled clearly. Lost property is mainly stored in the hallway, but should rarely be used if clothing is labelled clearly.

FOOD Due to food allergies, students are encouraged not to share food. Your support with this would be greatly appreciated. We have some students in Foundation this year with food allergies, so please consider this when packing your child’s lunch. We also try to minimise wrappers at school by encouraging “nude food.” Please make sure your child’s drink bottle is filled with water rather than cordial or juice at the beginning of each day.
Some things to know...

**BOOKS**

Book packs have been delivered to school and have been unpacked and checked. If your child’s book pack, or part of their order is still to come to school, please follow this up ASAP. Foundation teachers always sort and label the workbooks themselves and distribute the materials throughout the year when needed.

Please make sure your child has a library bag, as they cannot borrow a book from the library without one.

Boxes of tissues and Art smocks were included on the booklist and teachers greatly appreciate students bringing these items to school.

**Reading Satchels/Folders**

We aim to put all notes in the green reader satchel. So, that’s Quaynotes, reminders, small scribbles from us, work to take home etc…always check the satchels/folders for notes as there is no specific day that they will come home.

The reading satchel/folder needs to come to school every day. Students will change their take-home book every morning (we will teach them how) and then we’ll hand out the readers before home time. Magic Word books are also kept in the satchels/folders and these will be used in the classroom. Notes to us are okay in the reading satchel but we may not look at the yellow reading diary every day, so maybe let your child know that there’s a note for us in there and we’ll take a look. Take Home Reading will begin during Week 5 of Term 1.

**Magic Words**

Students will have a week between quizzes, so plenty of time to practice. If we feel that your child is not ready for their next list, we will keep them on the same list for as long as it takes. Trust us, this is a good thing and certainly nothing to do with how much you practice at home. It is important that they really do know the words and not just memorised their location on the page, so we’ll mix things up a bit. You should too. Why not put the words on cards and play some games? Lots of fun to be had. If there is a day off on the day of your child’s quiz, we will aim to catch them up the next day. If they are absent from school they may just miss out that week. Magic Words will also be sent home on Monday the 22nd of February.

**Mathletics and Reading Eggs**

We will be sticking a Mathletics and Reading Eggs username and password inside the front cover of your child’s yellow reading diary which will be sent home at some stage next week. Mathletics and Reading Eggs are great sites and can be used at home to reinforce concepts covered at school. We will be using these at school also, but it is difficult to use it before children have learnt to read, so therefore assistance at home is recommended. There are thousands of other great Maths and Literacy sites online too.

Maths is all around us, in shapes around the house, numbers on letter boxes, at the shops. Enjoy Maths and English with your child.

**Individual Classrooms**

As we are sure every family can appreciate, all classrooms are different. The content and quality of the education your child receives is of the same outstanding nature in every classroom, but teachers usually have their own way of doing things and setting up their routines. What happens in one classroom may look quite different in the next. What you do need to know is that your children are in the most capable, nurturing, caring hands you could hope for. The children are in for a fantastic year!
Some things to know...

Absences— early/late arrival procedure
We appreciate that for various reasons your child may be absent, arrive at school late or depart early. If your child is absent, you can fill in a form on the Torquay College Skoolbag App and it will be passed on to your child’s teacher. Alternatively, you can write a note and give it to your child’s teacher. If your child arrives at school late or departs early, you will need to sign them in/out at the school office and give your child's teacher a late/early release pass. The Skoolbag app can be downloaded from the Apple App Store or Google Play.

Timetable and Daily Routine
At Torquay College we run on a fortnightly timetable. The Foundation students attend Music, Art and our Perceptual Motor Program (P.M.P.) classes weekly and Indonesian and Physical Education classes fortnightly. With their teacher, they will also have Library, Environmental Education Centre and Computer lessons. A timetable for your child’s class will be sent out or displayed on the classrooms window.

Students will need to wear runners for Physical Education classes. During P.M.P. students work on their motor skills by taking part in fun activities. As part of this program they need to take their shoes on and off. It would be great if you could practice with them at home so that they can complete this task independently.

Before and After School Care
If your child is attending After School Care, it is important that you let their teacher know by signing their name in on the sheet found in each classroom. This will help to avoid any confusion or tears and is the parents responsibility.

Parent Helpers
At Torquay College, we encourage parents and carers to be an active part of their child’s learning. In the Foundation team we run a parent helper program. This may look slightly different in each classroom. Some tasks you may be given could include; working with a small group of students to support their learning, listening to students read or even helping out by laminating or assisting in creating classroom resources. Classroom help will commence in Term 2 for all of our Foundation team.

To be a Parent Helper you need to have a current ‘Working with Children Check’ (forms available at the Post Office), attended the Parent Helper sessions and have signed the confidentiality form.

Parent Helper Course Dates: Tuesday 1st March - 8.30am – 9.30am, Wednesday 2nd March - 8.30am – 9.30am and Thursday 3rd March - 2.00pm – 3.00pm. Venue: Presentation Room

Canteen
A canteen list went home in Quaynotes (Feb 3rd) and is on the Skoolbag App. Each classroom has a lunch order basket for any lunch food orders. This year orders can also be made online. Snacks may be purchased at the canteen, and we recommend all coins for canteen to be put in a named zip lock bag. Students are not allowed to buy or receive any canteen food from other students. This is due to allergies.

Communication
The Foundation Team is committed to building upon and nurturing the partnership between home and school. Communication between home and school is a key factor in assisting your child to achieve his or her best. We encourage you to contact your child’s classroom teacher, Josh Brown (Team Leader) or our Assistant Principal, Christian Smith, about any issues or concerns you may have.

Torquay College App— we ask that all families download the Torquay College App from iTunes or Google Play (no cost). The majority of our communications will be sent through this means.
FOUNDATION CURRICULUM

READING  Students are encouraged and supported to read independently regularly at home and at school. Students will soon begin bringing home a daily reader. They also have the opportunity to borrow books from the school library. Each classroom is also equipped with a reading CAFÉ, that is full of interesting books to read in the classroom. The yellow reading diary is a great way to track your child’s reading at home and communicate with your classroom teacher.

LETTERS & SOUNDS  Students will be introduced to a new sound every day. In term 1, these sounds will be based on the sounds at the start of words. Ask your child which sound they learnt today. It can make for great learning opportunities.

MAGIC WORDS  Magic Words is a program designed to teach the most frequently used words. Students will bring home a Magic Words book in their reader and are expected to practice the list words at home in preparation for a weekly quiz. This practice, and reading every night, make up the prep homework program and help to reinforce classroom learning. Try not to make it a chore, it can and should be a lot of fun.

WRITING  Students are involved in a range of regular writing activities in the classroom. It is always amazing to track each child’s improvement, from writing with scribbles and lines to writing structured sentences on dotted thirds. We teach the students Victorian Modern Cursive handwriting font. Please help by reminding your child of what they did on the weekend so we can do recounts on Monday.

SPEAKING & LISTENING  All students are regularly involved in speaking and listening in their classroom. Concepts that we will be looking at include students being able to follow multi-step directions, listening and responding to short stories, and asking a variety of “wh” questions (who, what, when, where, why). Chatting with your child about school, friends, TV shows, books etc at home can make a big difference. The Show and Share/Tell program is a key element of developing these skills. Please ensure and assist your child in preparing and rehearsing at home.

NUMERACY  In term 1 our Maths work is based around introducing Maths concepts in a fun and hands-on way. Our Maths is based on “real-life” moments and students interests. This term we also begin the fun task of counting to 100 days of school.

INQUIRY LEARNING  Our term 1 topic is “What makes me who I am?”, where we look at who we are and how we can be successful at school. Key concepts include: safety at school, School Values, School Rules / Classroom rules, How to be a friend, How to be a learner and the role of Buddies.

ICT  Each class is booked in to use the computer lab on a weekly basis. As well as this, each classroom is also equipped with 6 computers and has access to a class set of ipads. This year we have subscriptions to Mathletics and Reading Eggs which will be utilised at school, and can be used at home. Our ICT program is based on providing students with skills whilst reinforcing classroom topics.

Social Skills  As well as teaching the school values of Respect, Friendship and Doing Your Best, bucket filling is a big part of what we do in Foundation. Does your child fill buckets at home? The ‘bucket filling’ concept is based on the idea that all day long, every one of us carries an invisible bucket. When we say and do kind and meaningful things, we fill up the buckets of others and fill up our own buckets too. Bucket filling leads to positive self esteem and at school that means happy children and a caring classroom.

Some useful iPad Apps:

**Numeracy:**
- 123 Tracer
- Line em Up
- Friendly Shapes (TabTale)

**Literacy:**
- Tab Tale Stories
- abc PocketPhonics Lite
- ABC Phonics Animals Writing HD
- Little Matchups ABC
- ABC Alphabet Phonics
Why not talk to your child about the 3 key school values...

**FRIENDSHIP, RESPECT, DOING YOUR BEST**

**TERM 1 EVENTS:**

**Meet & Greet Interviews**—Tuesday 23rd and Wednesday 24th February, 3.15-5.10pm, Classroom

The purpose of these interviews is for parents and teachers to meet and discuss how their child is finding the transition into Foundation. Teachers will not be in a position to provide feedback on academic ability at this time. You may have also had the opportunity to discuss your child during the Wednesday Online Testing sessions.

**Curriculum Day and Labour Day Public Holiday**—Friday 11th and Monday 14th March

Students will not be required at school for either of these days. I hope you get the chance to make the most of the long weekend.

**Parent Helper Training** Please keep an eye on Quay Notes and the App if you are interested in helping in the classroom. A briefing in regards to training will be held on the Tuesday 1st March - 8.30am – 9.30am, Wednesday 2nd March - 8.30am – 9.30am and Thursday 3rd March - 2.00pm – 3.00pm in the Presentation Room. You will also need a current working with children check. We will need helpers for excursions throughout the year and you will also need a working with children check to attend these.

Please keep an eye on Quaynotes and the App for important events and news

To help students to focus in the classroom:

**Helpful Hints**

- We encourage students to **drink water** throughout the day.
- It is very important that **children get enough sleep** to function effectively.
- **Regular school attendance** is vital if students are to feel success as a learner and develop important social skills. A **note** is expected with any absence from school. This can be done via the school App.

**Extra Curricular Activities**

Torquay College students have many opportunities to be involved in extra curricular activities throughout the Year. It would be a good idea to encourage your child to get involved in all the fantastic opportunities provided at Torquay College. These programs provide your child with opportunities to socialise with their peers within a structured environment.

Many of these programs are currently being planned and organised. Keep an eye out on the Torquay College App and in Quay Notes for further information.

“**My mum forgot to pack my hat!”**

You will see many benefits from placing your child in charge of their bag, including packing it and carrying it into class.

We want all students to be empowered to look after their learning and not to blame mum and dad, or nan and pop, or siblings… or the dog when things go wrong! Resilience is a major focus in all Foundation classrooms, being able to “bounce back” when things don’t go to plan.

**Our Partnership with you**

As staff at Torquay College, we aim to provide a challenging, stimulating and safe learning environment where all students are encouraged to work to the best of their ability. This involves a partnership between the home and school. We encourage you to keep in regular contact with your child’s teacher. If you need to speak to a teacher or Assistant Principal, please don’t hesitate to make an appointment before or after school. We are looking forward to a very successful and happy year working alongside you.

*Living and Learning by the Sea*