Welcome to Foundation at B.H.P.S!

Thank you for making the children’s transition from home to school so successful. The children are settling into school life very well and are learning to work and play in a responsible manner.

During Term 1 our program will focus on familiar Nursery Rhymes and stories. The children will be confident to “read” because they know these stories so well. The numbers and words from 1 - 10 will be introduced and studied. We will also be learning about safety at school, home and in the sun.

Reading
The children are showing a keen interest in reading. Books will be sent home each evening and we encourage the children to read every night. Each child has received a zip-up pencil case. Inside the pocket of this “Book Bag” will be a word ring. Each week high frequency words will be added for your child to learn. Please practise, practise, practise these words each night!

At first the children will be taking home books that we make. These books are based on the topics we are covering in class. When they read these books to you, please date and sign on the back of the book each night. These little books should remain in the book bag until they are replaced with a new book. This will usually be at the end of each week. Keep the books at home after this time and revise them often. Please make sure that your child brings the book bag to school each day.

Classroom Helpers
In the next few weeks we will be sending home a notice asking for parents to help in the classroom. Before you can start to help us, every helper needs to have a Working with Children Check and also have completed our Classroom Helpers’ Program.

The forms for the Working with Children Check are available from the school office or the Post Office. The Working with Children Check does not require any payments, as it is free for volunteers. You will need to pay for a photo.

The Classroom Helpers’ Program will be run on Wednesday 9th March. Please check the Bimbadeen Blaze or school website for more information.
**Notices**

Please put all notices in your child’s reader bag.
The weekly Bimbadeen Blaze newsletter is now published online every Friday to help us reduce the amount of paper used at school. Please check this each week www.bimbadeenheightsps.vic.edu.au If you would prefer to receive the newsletter in a hard copy, please complete the form in the Back To School Kit.
By now you will have received the “Back to School Kit”. Please return all relevant forms as soon as possible.

**Foundation Information Book**


**Food Ideas**

At the Foundation Information Night last year we outlined the “Fruit Time” initiative. This involves encouraging the children to bring a small piece of fresh fruit or a vegetable snack to eat during Fruit Time. This will be timetabled as a break during the 2 hour Literacy Block—usually around 10.00 am. The children will be able to have a drink of water from a drink bottle at any time but it must be only water in the drink bottle—cordials, etc, create a sticky mess in the classroom.

**Play Time snack** — 11.00 am. We encourage children to eat a healthy and sustaining snack at this time, as they have 2 very active hours to go before lunch—half a sandwich is a good choice. (Perhaps chips and sweets could be reserved for special treats.) We are trying to reduce rubbish at school and children are not allowed to take food wrappings outside.

**Lunch Time** — 1.00 pm.
The canteen is open on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday for lunch orders and treats.
Please pack fruit and snacks when your child has a lunch order.

*Regulation school hats are compulsory during Term 1 and Term 4.
*Please ensure that all school items are named. On any warm day up to 60 blue, size 6 windcheaters may be removed at lunchtime!
* Please name your child’s shoes as the children will be taking their shoes off for Music lessons this year.
*Each child requires a thin colouring book for wet playtimes, a library bag, a large box of tissues and an art smock.

Thank you for supporting our program
Malcolm Rosendale, Emily Russell and Beth Dean
Some helpful parent tips for the first school year

Source: AussieKids parenting publication
January 2008, Volume 3, number 1

Name Everything
Did you know that schools eat jumpers and jackets, hats and glasses? Name everything clearly and then name it again. You are entering the years when your income is no longer your own, children are bottomless pits. If possible, buy multiple jumpers and accept the natural attrition. Lost property may return in three or four years, but that’s no help when the rain is teeming today and your child is freezing.

Miracle Teachers really do care
Schools can be frightening for first-time parents. Memories of army-like discipline and boring lessons come flooding back, together with not knowing how to approach a teacher. However teachers really want your child to be happy to discuss any concerns with you.

First class teachers are miracle workers. They can juggle at least twenty balls at a time, paste a lion while singing all parts of Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star. But teachers do have demanding timetables, meetings to attend and most importantly a class of wriggling balls of energy waiting for them. It is difficult to discuss individual student issues before school or even at dismissal without warning. Therefore, you might have to make an appointment. This means the teacher can give your issue the attention it deserves.

Tired beyond belief
At the end of pre-school, children are often so full of energy, but school is a whole new world. No one is really prepared for how tired their child is during the first weeks and months of school. They may become grumpy, hard to wake in the morning, cry easily or even feel sick despite appearing quite healthy. It doesn’t mean they aren’t happy at school, simply that they are facing a whole new world, one of the biggest changes they’ll ever face in life. Maybe this is the time to put your social calendar on hold and have quiet, gentle evenings at home with your child.

Many children are fine for the first few weeks, then suddenly realise school actually is a permanent thing and become very difficult in the morning. It’s not a reflection on your parenting, but a normal stage. Many parents find they simply have to be firm and ride it out.

Show and Tell Arms Race
‘Show and Tell’ is the highlight of the week for children, if not teachers. For parents promotion of toys and every new Lego or pony product become compulsory purchases. However, strategic planning can overcome this dilemma. When out, travelling for work, or on holidays, look for small items for show and tell. Encourage your child’s computer skills by preparing a PowerPoint presentation of weekend activities. A simple photo or postcard develops just as interesting show and tell without encouraging six year old tyrants.

Wonderfully proud or a little obsessive?
We are so proud of our little ones, but the ‘ugly parent’ syndrome has its roots even at the start of school. It’s easy to fall into a trap of being over-competitive about our own children’s achievements, or upset that others appear to advance faster than your child. Suddenly the level of children’s readers becomes essential knowledge. Who is in which literacy or numeracy group leads to status and power. For some parents this is an all-consuming obsession. So be understanding, or boast if it makes you feel better.

Time to step back
In the months before school starts you have probably been looking forward to the ‘spare’ time now that your child is at school. No longer is life controlled by pre-school pick-up, or a child ready for a new adventure beyond an afternoon sleep.

However, this can be a chance to take a little time-out. Pause and enjoy the space without constant demands. Don’t worry, the hours will quickly be filled. This gap won’t last long in today’s hurried world. So use this time to take a breather and acknowledge that you have worked hard in the last six years and deserve your own personal playtime.

Questions to ask your child
“What did you do at school today?” is usually answered by “I don’t know, nothing much.”
Avoid questions about other or who they played with. The answer “no-one” alarms parents, when in fact children usually have plenty of friends. Try:

- Tell me three good things that happened at school today.
- What was your favourite thing at school?
- Specific questions about content work well. Most beginning classes focus on a letter of the alphabet each week, so ask about the letter, and what words the child has used with it.