Dear Parents/Guardians,

The teachers of the Grade Four Learning Community, Mrs. Helen Takano (room 13), Mrs. Linda Barakat and Ms. Kerrie O’Brien (room 14), Miss Michelle Tyzack (room 12), Mrs. Lydia Dunbar (room 41) and Miss Renee Easson (room 42) would like to welcome the year four students and their families to 2016. We are excited and enthusiastic about our first term of teaching and learning. We look forward to building positive relationships with you and your child this year.

We have started Term One by exploring the transdisciplinary theme of ‘Who We Are’ with a focus on ‘Learning to Learn’. The Learning File brings forth the understanding of how powerful the brain can be. Various thinking tools will be utilised during this learning time including: mind mapping, brainstorming, multiple intelligences and goal setting. Goal setting is an ongoing process where the students are guided in the setting of short and long-term goals to work towards in key areas of the curriculum. Students will also begin to develop their portfolios, which will showcase their learning across all curriculum areas through work samples, assessment and reflections.

The Primary Years Programme (PYP) continues to be implemented throughout all curriculum areas at Seabrook Primary School. This encourages students to maintain positive social relationships while developing knowledge, skills, concepts, attitudes and taking action to be successful lifelong learners. Teachers will be working together with students in the discussion and creation of whole class Essential Agreements, through the unpacking of the PYP Learner Profile and Attitudes; which demonstrate positive values. The Learner Profile and Attitudes help guide people to become global citizens that are principled and caring. Each class will also develop consequences in line with the whole school code of conduct, which relates directly to their Essential Agreement.

Our first unit of inquiry for 2016 will be based on the Central Idea that ‘Values and beliefs influence personal identities’, which encompasses the transdisciplinary skill of self-management and the PYP subject areas of personal, social and physical education. The key concepts for this inquiry are perspective (what are the points of view?) and reflection (how do we know?), which will be explored through the transdisciplinary theme of ‘Who We Are’. A focus and link to the attitudes of respect, integrity and tolerance will be investigated in more depth throughout this inquiry. The Learner Profiles of being open-minded, caring and reflective will also be linked to this inquiry.

The lines of inquiry are:
- The definition of personal identity, spiritual and religious belief systems.
- Spiritual and religious beliefs differ throughout communities around the world.
- Aspects of values contribute to an individual’s personality through religion & spirituality.

Students are encouraged to bring artefacts from home related to each inquiry, which might include items like; newspaper articles, posters, books, pamphlets, photographs or other objects that they can share prior knowledge of with their peers. Artefacts are an important part of the inquiry process as they help focus students’ thinking, personal learning and encourage class learning.

In order to make this unit of inquiry as engaging as possible we are asking our parents and school community to discuss their personal knowledge and experiences relating to this inquiry at home. Discussing inquiry learning at home with students promotes a stronger link with your child and their learning, as well as supporting the classroom environment. For our students this means engaging with people from the community, on both a local and global scale who are willing to share and talk about their experiences and knowledge. If you have a story or experience to share, please contact one of the grade four teachers to organise a time to visit us as a guest speaker.
ENGLISH
In English, teachers, in conjunction with students, will continue to use the essential learnings and a checklist incorporating AusVels/ Victorian Curriculum in order to plan, set goals and assess student learning in the areas of reading, writing, spelling and oral language. Students’ reading and viewing, including print and electronic texts, will be supported in the classroom through a variety of formats including:
- Modeled reading (read aloud)
- Guided reading
- Shared reading
- Independent reading
- Conferencing
- Focus on reading comprehension strategies

All students will be encouraged to show commitment to reading at home on a daily basis for the minimum of twenty to thirty minutes a night, which can be recorded in their Reading Log. This should include a variety of ‘just right’ texts that are chosen using independent tools such as the three or five-finger test. We will continue to further develop students’ reading comprehension using the strategies composed by Di Snowball. These are; predicting, visualising, summarising, questioning, think aloud and text structure and features. A focus for term one will be on predicting (Thoughtful readers use relevant prior knowledge to predict when reading, forming hypotheses about what might occur next. When reading, they bring knowledge from life experiences and knowledge about the text, and form predictions based on this prior knowledge before and during reading) and questioning (Fluent readers actively and strategically engage when reading by asking questions. They question before during and after reading).

The writing component will focus on a revision of recount writing a re-introduction to narrative writing and an extension of the information report writing style. In conjunction with the focus on these writing genres, links to enhancing students’ vocabulary knowledge and the use of a range of letter spelling patterns will be revised and built on. Students will be engaged in authentic, guided and independent writing experiences that promote and encourage students to take more responsibility for their own writing pieces. Modeling, discussion and conferencing will be used with students to encourage them to develop their reflective writing styles, as a means of self-evaluation and highlighting future areas for improvement.

MATHEMATICS
In Mathematics, our aim for grade four is to develop mathematical skills through problem solving, real life scenarios, mental maths, and exploring a variety of strategies to solve a given problem. This will enable the students to apply their knowledge to everyday life. Expanding students’ mathematical language will also be a focus throughout the year. Where possible mathematics will be linked closely to the inquiry. Students’ mathematical learning will be represented using pictures, numbers and words.

Place value in the form of reading, writing, making, counting and representing a range of known numbers, numbers to five digits and beyond will be the starting point for work within the strand of Number. Students will then build on prior knowledge of the operations of addition and subtraction with higher and more challenging numbers.

eLearning
Students will have opportunities to use a range of ICT skills that support their learning throughout the entire curriculum. They will be encouraged to use different media software where they can express their ideas, thoughts and understandings. With the MacBook Program, teachers and students will begin the learning journey. Students will be given opportunities to use ICT as a tool for guided research purposes and to assist with the presentation of final copy pieces. Students will be provided with essential skills to help them with cyber safety and responsible computer usage.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact your child’s classroom teacher. We look forward to maintaining a close partnership with you and your child.

Kind regards,

Mrs. Takano, Mrs. Linda, Ms. O’Brien, Miss Tyzack, Ms Dunbar, Miss Easson
Year 4 Teachers
VISUAL ARTS - Paul Cochran

At Level 4, students independently and collaboratively experiment with and apply a range of skills, techniques and processes using a range of media, materials, equipment and tools to plan, develop, refine, make and present arts works. In their arts works, they communicate ideas and understandings about themselves and others, incorporating influences from their own and other cultures and times. They evaluate the effectiveness of their arts works and make changes to realize intended aims. They consider purpose and suitability when they plan and prepare arts works for presentation to a variety of audiences. The children will be encouraged to further develop the PYP profiles and attitudes of being a communicator, expressing their ideas confidently and creatively whilst being a risk taker with their learning by approaching new experiences with confidence.

During term one the focus in art will be the exploration of the art elements/principles of line, shape, colour and pattern. The students will explore these through a series of drawing activities including “The Fire Tree” (warm colours) and “Tsunami” (cool colours). A weaving activity incorporating “warm/cool and complimentary colours” will follow after the students spend time discovering the various aspects of the Colour Wheel.

PERFORMING ARTS – Adam Smith

This year the Grade Four students will be undertaking six months of performing arts. Three of the Grade Four classes have already started with the other three starting their six months in June. Performing arts will consist of four main disciplines Singing, Music, Drama and Dance. The performing arts program endeavors to develop confidence and creativity in a safe and fun learning environment. All students are required to participate with the focus being on risk-taking by having a go, testing limits and discovering new abilities or interests. The Grade Four students will undertake an independent ongoing performing arts inquiry to satisfy the requirements of the Victorian Curriculum. To do this the students will use the conceptual lenses of ‘Form, Causation and Perspective’ to explore the central idea that “Performance provides a perspective of the beliefs and values of others.” We will be looking at the beliefs and values we see in different cultural performances, the different factors that make a performance style the way it is, and that we see different perspectives through performance.

When possible students will be making links with their classroom inquiries to strengthen understandings and explore their ideas through the performing arts. Some links are:
- cultural dances and music.
- green screen and advertising.
- mask and the physicality of the elements.
- indigenous performance styles.

Undertaking these inquiries will help develop our students into independent and creative thinkers ready for the challenges that the future may hold.
ITALIAN – Paula Thomson

In term one, the Italian Program will continue to enable all students to be given the opportunity to learn a second language. There will be an emphasis on children revising vocabulary and continuing to build vocabulary that can be adapted for different purposes. Students will continue to interact and socialise with their teacher and their peers to exchange personal information and describe people, places, things and everyday routines relating to themselves, school and home. The students will continue to be introduced to phrases and questions useful in everyday situations, such as asking and answering simple questions such as ‘che giorno e’ oggi?’ - ‘What day is it today?’ or by using descriptive language such as ‘e grande’ - ‘it’s big’.

The students will be engaged in the Primary Years Programme units of inquiry where possible - with an emphasis on Learning to Learn, PYP attitudes and the Learner Profile. The students will link into the PYP unit of ‘Values and Beliefs Influence Personal Identities’. This unit will consist of learning all about ‘Carnevale’ (which is an annual Italian festival). The students will become familiar with the traditions of Italians during this time - including costumes and masks worn. Throughout the term, the Italian Program will continue to focus on the Italian culture, lifestyle, traditions and geography of Italy.

The Italian Program will assist in enabling students to be risk-takers, communicators, open-minded, principled, knowledgeable, Inquirers, thinkers, well-balanced, caring and reflective people. The Students will be encouraged to ask questions to better understand the world around them. The students will be provided with opportunities to use language effectively in a range of contexts from informal to formal.

The students will develop active listening skills and respond through action-related talk. They will take part in many discussions and many oral and written activities relating to these areas. They will use the language in familiar contexts and situations, through exchanging simple ideas and information, through speaking and listening, through books and through research and ICT - participating in shared tasks and individual tasks.

HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION
Blair Ganley & David Trott

During term one, the grade four children will be introduced to a variety of Fundamental Motor Skill activities. The focus will be on running, throwing, catching, bouncing and two-handed striking. These skills will be practiced using various games and sports including Cricket, Tee Ball and basketball. Through modified major games (for example, games with modified rules, equipment, playing field, length of game or numbers on a team such as modified basketball), students will begin to apply their skills in sport-specific settings. They will explore game tactics such as: introducing the concepts of attack and defence and describing the roles of various positions. Children will participate individually and in partner and group based activities. A major focus will be on integrating a fitness component into all sessions.

Children will have the opportunity to participate in school swimming trials and a district swimming carnival.

As part of the Physical Education program, the P.Y.P Attitudes such as cooperation, commitment and enthusiasm and the Student Profiles such as risk taking, caring and reflection will be linked to the way children work and participate in Physical Education sessions.