Welcome back! I hope you all enjoyed a restful holiday and made the best of the great winter weather. Now it is time to rug up, stay warm and keep those winter colds away.

Welcome
I would like to welcome Mrs Ruth Graves to our school. We all look forward to working with her. Mrs Graves will be teaching Peridot for the rest of the year.

Homework
Homework is given to students every Monday and is expected to be completed by the Friday. Home reading is encouraged every night and books can be changed daily when students return them in the morning. Bluey's Reading is also available, in the library, before school 3 days a week. Homework is set to reinforce and practice what is taught in class. It also teaches responsibility and working to time frames to students in the early years.

I found this article which is really great reading. Public schools in NSW don't expect children in Kindergarten to complete formal homework. They encourage families to read with their children and be involved in family activities that assist the development of their skills in reading, mathematics and problem solving to make the most of what they are learning.

Learning through play
Thea Eyles, an early childhood expert with the NSW Department of Education and Communities, says young children in the early years of school need the time to play. Homework should help build good learning habits. Ken Olah NSW Department of Education and Communities "I think the most powerful message around the homework issue for parents of children who are in Kindergarten and Year 1 is that playing is learning," Thea says.

"Early childhood educators know the importance of learning through play – it is this philosophy that forms the basis of early childhood education, and all of the international research supports this approach."

Formal homework
More formal homework usually starts in Years 1 and 2 where children may be asked to complete some maths, simple writing tasks, or an activity sheet. The purpose of this homework is to reinforce what has been learnt in class.

Homework helps:
* to bridge the gap between learning at school and learning at home.
* parents to see what their child can do and to be involved in their learning.
* improve children's concentration and focus.
* children to retain and understand what they've been taught in class.
* prepare children for what they will be taught the next day.
* provide children with the challenges and stimulus they need to engage in their classwork.

Perfect balance
NSW Department of Education and Communities curriculum expert Ken Olah says the homework policy, which schools use as a guide, is based on common sense.
"The amount of homework depends on the age of the student, the school context, the subject, the purpose for which the homework is set, and so on," he says.
"Homework should help build good learning habits; it shouldn't exhaust or turn kids off."

Schools develop their own homework policy with input from staff and parents. Ask your school for a copy. If you find homework is becoming too much or is too difficult for your child, or there is something specific going on for your family that makes getting homework done a real challenge, have a chat with your child's teacher.

Anne van Dartel
Principal

PBL FOCUS
We keep our hands and feet to ourselves
The P & C would like to congratulate Karen Wright, winner of the P & C raffle. Karen has picked herself up a trailer load of wood! Perfect timing I would say. Thank you to everyone who sold and purchased tickets. The next meeting will be held this Wednesday 17th of July, 6.30 at the SACC. Please feel free to join us and find out what is happening in your child's school life.

Diabetes Research
Researchers from the University of Queensland are conducting research into parenting of children with type 1 diabetes. We are seeking parents of children and adolescents with type 1 diabetes to participate. Participation in this project will involve completing a survey, and a telephone interview. The telephone interview includes questions on diabetes management tasks which parents of children with type 1 diabetes experience difficulty with, how parents think and feel about parenting a child with type 1 diabetes, and their preferences for assessing services to assist in dealing with these behaviours and tasks. If you are interested in participating in this research or would like further information please email clin.roslyn.pay@uq.edu.au Thank you for your help with this matter.
Yours Sincerely,
Roslyn Pay

Dubbo Stampede
Welcome back to Term 3! With the new term comes a wonderful opportunity to sign up for the 2014 Dubbo Stampede to be held at the Taronga Western Plains Zoo on Sunday 7 September. The event that often appeals to families is the 5.5km Dingo Dash; a walk, jog or run that loops past animals from all around the world. However, the 10km Cheetah Chase, the 21.1km Zebra Zoom and the 42.2km Rhino Ramble are also alternatives.
Details regarding events, times, pricing, merchandise and the registration process are available at www.dubbostampede.com.au
An event like The Dubbo Stampede also requires many, many enthusiastic volunteers. If you think that encouraging walkers and runners or helping out is something you or your family would like to be part of, we would love to hear from you via contact@dubbostampede.com.au

How to Help Keep Your Little Ones Safe
A talk on how to discuss safety with your kids and how to teach your kids about staying safe. Date: Monday 4th of August 2014 Time: 2pm Where: Buninyong SACC (next to the preschool) Who With: France Kelly Aboriginal Health Worker and Nadine Rowe Social Worker with the Aboriginal Children’s Therapy Team

This talk is on protective behaviours which are a group of skills that can assist kids to deal with everyday situations that may make them feel unsafe such as bullying, peer pressure, or abuse. Sometimes it can be hard to talk about these things with kids, or to know what is helpful. This will be a chance to learn about how you can help your kids, and to talk about any other worries you may have.
If you have any worries that you would prefer to discuss in private, feel free to call Francie or Nadine at any time on 6881 8077.