



Care – Aspiration – Respect

Our Vision: To build an inclusive community where our children

Welcome to Term 1

Our year is off to a great start and the children are settling into their first year of school at SEPS very well. This newsletter aims to inform our Foundation families of the learning programs for the term, ideas and tips for helping your child's learning at home, and outline some of the routines that your child will become increasingly familiar with as the year goes on and they develop their independence. This newsletter is a long but important one, so settle in with a nice cuppa—Happy reading!

What to bring each day & home-school communication

Encourage your child to be responsible for their own schoolbag—including packing it, carrying it, and placing it in their locker. Their lunchbox and school hat stay in their locker until they're required throughout the day. Remember we encourage nude food in lunchboxes and we are a Nut Free school.

Each morning your child is responsible for swapping their take-home book then placing their diary and take-home folder into the tub/tray. They will be doing this independently. We ask for your help to remind your child to bring in their take-home folder and diary to school every day, as it is the primary communication tool between home and school. Teachers routinely write notes in the student diaries for families and we encourage parents to do the same, as well as using it to record all at-home reading.

Our class parent representatives form a vital home-school link and you will occasionally receive email communication from the teachers via the parent reps as well as emails through Compass.

Foundation Teachers

0A – Alex Whittle

0B – Kate Clark

0C – Carmen Leal

Sally Duggan will support students on Monday

Term 1 dates 2023

Start your day with a coffee from our coffee van - Brad will serve you from 8.45am.

Jan 30th First day for students

Feb 1st Canteen starts today

Feb 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd. & March 1st, 8th - No Foundation classes. 1:1 assessments.

Feb 6th Assembly whole school

Feb 10th Hungers Busters commence

Feb 14th Welcome Parent Morning Tea 9am in stadium

Feb 21st – Take home books begin for students.

March 13th Labour Day holiday

TEACHING & LEARNING

Children learn in different ways, at different rates and at different times. At SEPS, we personalise learning to suit each child's skills, areas for development and interests.

English: The English program integrates the three areas of reading and viewing, writing and spelling, and speaking and listening. In the first year of primary school oral language provides the basis for communication. The development of speaking and listening skills is paramount for children to communicate their ideas and understandings successfully. Children learn to follow more complex instructions, ask and answer questions, share ideas, present understandings and findings to groups of children and listen to others.

READING: During reading lessons, children begin to explore different texts with decodable words and repetitive language. They also make connections between the texts and their own experiences. Children are introduced to some early reading strategies to support the development of reading for enjoyment and meaning. These strategies include:

- Activating and organising prior knowledge before hearing or reading a book—What kind of book is this? What do you think the book will be about? What do you know about this topic?
- Predicting what might happen, checking, confirming and self correcting.
- Using picture clues and the initial/final sounds in words to support decoding of unknown words.
- Using decodable texts
- Using a word that makes sense. Children ask, "What makes sense? Does it look right? Does it sound right?"
- Chunking, breaking a word into parts, looking for chunks they know such as -at, -an, -ing etc. and looking for smaller words inside bigger words.
- Skipping the word, reading on to the end of the sentence and then going back to the word.
- Discussing what happened in a narrative story and what they found out in an information text.

WRITING & SPELLING: Children begin to explore the 'THRASS chart', identifying letters and letter combinations (graphemes) and their corresponding sounds (phonemes). During term one particular emphasis is placed on naming the letters of the alphabet, writing the **lowercase letters** and learning the location of the pictures on the consonant and vowel charts and the sound boxes they represent. As children develop confidence, emphasis is placed on recording the dominant sounds they hear in words to communicate their ideas. We explore features of writing including simple sentences, basic punctuation, spaces between words and use of 'plausible' spelling (e.g. the word 'table' might appear in your child's writing as 'tb', 'tal' etc, which demonstrates their emerging ability to pinpoint key sounds in a word and assign a corresponding letter to those sounds).

HIGH FREQUENCY WORDS: All children will be given some 'coloured word lists' in their take home folder as part of our home-school learning partnership. The first set are the Golden Words. Whilst certainly not the easiest to read or spell, these are the **12 most common English words**. Across all of the lists, the 200 most common English words are featured. As children gain proficiency in both **reading** and **spelling / writing** these, they will work through each colour level. Games and cards can be made using the words to help them become recognised. All children develop at different rates and therefore it is acceptable to stay on one list for some time. It is important that children not only recognise the words but also use them in context, including reading them in books and writing them with correct spelling. Children will usually learn to read these words before they learn to spell them. Please go back and practise previous word lists regularly and keep this a relaxed and fun activity. The teachers will give your child new lists as we assess them gradually throughout the year.

How can you support English learning at home?

READING

Book Orientation—Before reading:

- Talk about the book before you read it. Discuss features of the book to tune your child into the story e.g., read the title, look at the front cover and pictures.
- Ask your child to predict what the story could be about. Activate prior knowledge about the topic.
- Go through the book page by page before reading. Discuss the pictures in the book and encourage your child to talk about the pictures first.

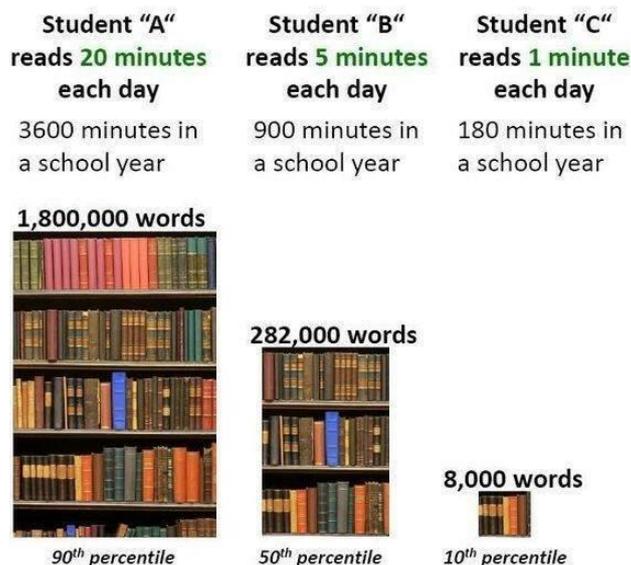
Reading with your child— For beginning readers:

- After tuning your child into the story they may be ready to read to you.
- You can read first if your child wants you to. Demonstrate how to read a page—left to right, top to bottom.
- If it is a decodable book, they might be able to sound out the letters in the words.
- If it is a repetitive book, they might pick up the pattern and be able to take over.
- Move your finger along the page so your child can connect the sounds of the words with the look of the words on the page. Point out that you say one word for each word on the page.
- Take turns reading parts of the story with your child. You might read first, then they can 'copy' your model.
- Leave out the last word in some sentences to encourage your child to join in with you—especially fun for rhyming books!
- Let your child have a go by themselves and praise their efforts. Talk about the book during and after reading. Read to your child often! Aim for 20 minutes per day, every day.

Your child reading to you—For more confident readers.

- Tune your child into the book (see Book Orientation above). Encourage them to look at the front cover—pictures, title, author, illustrator. Activate prior knowledge and have them predict what the story will be about. Do a 'picture flick'—look through the book and use the pictures to support prediction. During and after reading confirm or challenge their predictions and make new predictions based on what is happening in the story. Get your child to scan the words on the page. Are there any they already know? Are there any that might be a challenge? Figure out some of the trickier words first, so it doesn't disrupt the flow of reading later.
- Encourage your child to look at the picture for clues when trying to read a long or tricky word. Ask questions such as; What can you see that might start with that letter? What word makes sense? What letter does it start with? What sound does the letter make? What letter does it end with?
- Support your child's decoding of new words by asking them to try a word that makes sense. Ask what makes sense? Does it look right? Does it sound right?
- As your child becomes more confident with his/her knowledge of sounds (phonemes) encourage stretching the word out slowly and putting the sounds back together again, sounding out the word.
- After reading—What happened in the story? What was your favourite part? Who are the characters? Who was your favourite character in the story? Why did you like the character?

Why Can't I Skip My 20 Minutes of Reading Tonight?



By the end of 6th grade Student "A" will have read the equivalent of 60 whole school days. Student "B" will have read only 12 school days. Which student would you expect to have a better vocabulary? Which student would you expect to be more successful in school...and in life?

(Nagy & Herman, 1987)

High Frequency Words

The list of activities below are designed to support your child with the development of their 'sight vocabulary' (eg. golden, red, blue words etc.). The opportunities are endless!

- Play 'Who am I?' e.g., I am a golden word, I have four letters and I end in 't'. Apply this game to the THRASS chart e.g., I am the first word on the first line of the consonant chart. What am I?
- Play 'tic, tac, toe, here I go, where I stop I do not know' – children say the word that you stop on. This can also be played with the THRASS chart.
- Cut the golden words out of a newspaper or magazine, this also supports development of fine motor skills.
- Play coin toss – put words on the floor, take turns to toss a coin onto a card and say the word.
- Play 'Snap' with sets of words (eg. all words from the same colour, or all words with the same number of letters, get creative).
- Find and match words in charts/signs/take home books.
- Practise writing the words on paper, in a book, on a tablet/iPad and typing on the computer.
- Play 'Concentration' by turning two sets of matching words face down and then picking up one of the cards and trying to find its partner.
- Play 'Bingo'. Make bingo cards using golden words. Call out a word and have children place a counter on their card if they have the word called.

Writing & Spelling

- Trace over lower-case letters of the alphabet and practise writing them and their name independently on a small whiteboard, paper, tablet/iPad or in a book.
- Encourage your child to 'put pencil to paper' in ways that engage them—eg. they might draw a picture and label it or write a sentence to give to a friend, they might try to write a letter or postcard to a family member, they might write a wish-list for their birthday or help with the shopping list.
- The focus is on making it authentic, brief and fun. It shouldn't feel like a chore!

Mathematics: Ideas for at-home learning

Mathematics plays an important part in our lives. We use Mathematics in everyday situations when we read the time, weigh out ingredients, count out money, fill up the car with fuel, record family and individual events in planners and diaries and plan holidays, just to name a few.

Mathematics in the Foundation year involves lots of talk and discussion about mathematical ideas. Children participate in practical hands-on learning experiences that allow them to model their understandings and explain their thinking.

The first one hundred days of school is a key component of our Mathematics program in semester one. It is a catalyst for the exploration of number through meaningful and relevant learning experiences. Children investigate different ways each number can be made, recorded and represented. Some of the key concepts explored include the correct formation of the numerals 0-9, matching number names to numerals, counting using one to one correspondence, making, identifying, ordering and comparing groups of objects, conservation of number, identifying odd and even numbers and matching cardinal and ordinal numbers. Children continue to practise the correct formation of numerals one to nine. The children have been introduced to number rhymes to support the correct formation of these numerals. Please see over the page for rhymes.

Numeral formation rhymes...

0— Make a big loop, just like so. This is how you make zero.

1—Start at the top and down you run, that's how you write the number one.

2—Around the track and back. Two! Two! Two!

3—Around the tree, around the tree, that's how you write the number three.

4—Down, across and down some more, that's how you write the number four.

5—Down the street and around the corner, whoops I forgot my hat!

6—Down to a loop, the six draws a hoop.

7—Across the sky and down from heaven, that's how you write the number seven.

8—Make an 'S' and do not wait, go back up and shut the gate.

9—A loop and a line make nine.

- Play 'I Spy' to identify shapes, numbers and patterns.
- Roll a die and say, make and write the number identified. Roll two six sided dice and say, make and write the total shown. Play lots of board games!
- Practise writing the numerals 0 to 9 correctly using the number rhymes above.
- Go on a 'number hunt' with your child. Find numbers around you e.g., house numbers, car number plates, signs, calendars, newspapers, shopping catalogues.
- Encourage your child to draw and talk about the number of things in the pictures they draw.
- Relate numbers to actions e.g., clap eight times, hop three etc.
- Play matching number games with playing cards.
- Put cards in order from largest to smallest by counting the shapes (hearts, spades) or using the numbers on the cards.
- Collect and count objects such as toys, shells, flowers.

Please remember that the above ideas, as with the English ideas, are suggestions for you to use at home to support your child's learning. The learning needs to be fun and enjoyable. If your child is tired or emotional it is better to leave the activity and revisit it another time.

How can I assist in my child's classroom or on excursions?

Parents/Guardians wishing to support the Foundation learning programs e.g., Investigations, Literacy, Numeracy and excursions need to have a [current Working With Children Check \(WWCC\)](#). This is a legal requirement. Forms can be collected from the post office or visit the Working With Children Check website at www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/ Working With Children Checks must be presented to the school administration office where a copy will be taken. Parents supporting programs in the school must sign in at the school office prior to entering the learning area where they will be working. Your WWCC must be worn in a lanyard available from the office when participating in our school programs, both on school grounds and on excursions.

Parents wishing to assist **must attend a Parent Volunteers Information Session**. You will need to attend **one** of the sessions. **Date TBC.**

Volunteers in Foundation will commence in Term 2 depending on DET Covid safety advice.

Investigations — Walker Learning Pedagogy

At SEPS our teaching and learning practice in Foundation to Level 2 incorporates 'Investigations' which is part of our holistic, developmental, child-centred approach. Investigations is embedded into the Foundation program and philosophy. During Investigations, held 3 times per week, children engage in active, hands-on learning experiences based on their interests that promote the development of literacy, numeracy, fine motor, thinking, inquiry, creative, social and emotional skills.

Children commence the sessions with their class teacher for Tuning In with the Focus Children, Reporter and Photographer, but through Investigations have the opportunity to move freely around the learning spaces. The learning in Investigations provides a springboard for explicit English and Mathematics teaching sessions. It is the teacher's role to 'scaffold' the learning, particularly for the Focus Children, and to link Investigations to other learning areas, whether it be academic, social, emotional, etc.

Parents and guardians who have completed the volunteers training course (see previous page) will receive a roster and are invited to nominate sessions they would like to assist with. Please note this is valuable learning time for the children and therefore we are unable to have toddlers present during these sessions. Parent volunteers will commence next term.

In term 1 the teachers will be reporting back to parents through the Learning Task about their child's Investigations experiences.

Home learning expectations

Children will soon be bringing take-home books home each night in their take-home folder. The books your child brings home will be chosen by them, from a designated selection of levelled books, and may or may not be read independently at this stage. See page 3 for tips and information about assisting your child with their reading at home. Children's abilities vary considerably and some children may like to take more responsibility for reading themselves, whilst others may like the book to be read first by an adult and then shared. This time together needs to be fun and enjoyable, as for many they are an extension of lovely literacy experiences such as bedtime stories. It is important to set aside a special time each day for sharing the books, but try not to make it too late as the children will be tired. Remember that we read so we can enjoy books—shared reading should be a fun time for both parents and children. Give your close attention and show interest in the story. We all like praise, so don't forget to encourage your child's efforts. Please record your child's reading attempts in the diary daily including the name of the book.

As the children are still well and truly getting used to the routines of school, they might need frequent reminding to swap their book and place their folder and diary in the tub/tray. It is impossible for teachers to 'police' each child swapping their books so your cooperation and support with this is greatly appreciated as children will gradually become more independent with this. Remember that a 'reader' is a person—the one doing the reading. Please do not refer to their books as 'readers'. Rather, we prefer to call them their 'take-home books'.

To support all areas of literacy, the children are also developing their 'fluent' recall and spelling of high frequency words. The children gradually receive new lists of words (up to the 200 most common English words) as they are ready. The teachers frequently check-in with each child individually on their reading and spelling of these words (starting with the golden words, red words, etc), especially when the children are a Focus Child during Investigations. Once your child has demonstrated that they can fluently read the words and spell the words in their written texts, they may spend a couple of weeks consolidating before bringing home their new list—which is always a very proud and exciting achievement!

Reminders—Things to bring

Library bags—These will be supplied during your child's first library borrowing session. Library bags are required by the student to borrow every session. One book at a time can be borrowed and it must be returned before borrowing again. Our library sessions will be on Tuesdays.

Art smocks— Please send along a named smock (preferably without buttons) as soon as possible, which will stay at school.

Change of clothes—All children need a change of clothes in their school bags, just in case!

Please ensure all items are named, so they can make their way back to your child if misplaced.

School Expectations

- **Commencement:** Children are expected to be on time to school/class and not rushed. This means arriving with enough time to organise their school bag and independently complete their morning routines. Classrooms are open from approximately 8:50am for children to get organised and settled, so that we can begin promptly at 9:00. Students will line up on the blue basketball court and your child's teacher will collect the class.
- **Absences:** A note must be entered on Compass to explain student absences as early as possible to your child returning to school. We should be informed of 'planned absences' such as family holidays in advance.
- **Late arrivals:** Students arriving after the bell has gone at 9:00 must be signed in at the front office.
- **Uniform:** Children are expected to wear full school uniform, include wide-brim hats in terms one & four.
- **Notices:** Excursion permission notes will be placed on Compass throughout the year and you will need to give consent for your child to participate.
- **Behavioural expectations:** All school community members (students, families and staff) agree to uphold the SEPS values and expectations at all times, in all interactions with other members of the school community. This includes holding high expectations for student behaviour when at school.
- **Newsletters:** Each term, the year level teams publish a newsletter such as this one, to outline current and future learning, as well as provide ideas to support learning at home. The SEPS Newsletter is published weekly, providing families with news, school happenings, messages from Mrs Walton and community updates. The newsletters are available digitally via the link on COMPASS or the school website.

General Information

- **Assemblies:** Monday mornings. Assembly leadership is rotated by teachers and to accommodate parents we have set out a plan to stagger level parents who will enter through the library doors. To be compliant with parent attendance assemblies will conclude at 9.15am.
- **Dismissal:** We ask all parents / carers to wait on the blue basketball court for your child / children. Foundation students will exit their classrooms and sit on the playground wooden bench facing the basketball court. From here students will be able to see their siblings or grown up and give their teacher an 'air high 5' before walking to their parents. It is important that teachers can bring the students out to an open area so we can account for all children leaving the area.
- **Canteen:** Canteen is on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. If your child has a lunch order please make sure you pack some snacks for 'fruit break' and recess.
- **Head Lice & Illnesses:** Head lice can be a problem so please keep checking your child's hair and remember to tie up long hair. Please inform the school if your child has head lice. Please also be vigilant with contagious illnesses such as conjunctivitis and the flu, which spread easily in classrooms!

Specialist Classes

	Tuesday	Thursday	Friday
0A Miss Whittle	Library, Mandarin & Art	PE & Performing Arts	Gardening
0B Miss Clark	Library, Mandarin & Art	PE & Performing Arts	Gardening
0C Mrs Leal	Library, PE & Performing Arts	Mandarin & Art	Gardening

RE-FRAMING AFTER SCHOOL CHATS ~ QUESTION PROMPT IDEAS:

The below list features alternatives to “What did you do at school today?” to which children will often reply with “Nothing!”. These questions will help you to kick off the conversation. An idea is to pop this list on the fridge, in the car, by the dinner table—wherever you have your daily debrief.

“When were you happiest today?”

“What made you smile today?”

“Who were you kind to today?”

“What made your brain grow today?”

“Which places did you visit at school today?”

“Did you do anything nice for someone today?”

“Was it a quiet/busy/noisy/fun/relaxing/challenging day today? Why?”

“Tell me some things you saw today.”

“Did you spend time with a ‘new friend’ today? Would you like to become better friends with them/anyone else?” (Possible future playdate)

“Did you mostly work by yourself, with a partner or in a group today?”

“If you could do something from today again, what would it be? Why?”

“Did anything funny happen today?”

“Who did you talk to the most today?”

“Did you spend any special time with your teacher today (in a reading group, working 1-on-1 as a Focus Child, etc)?”

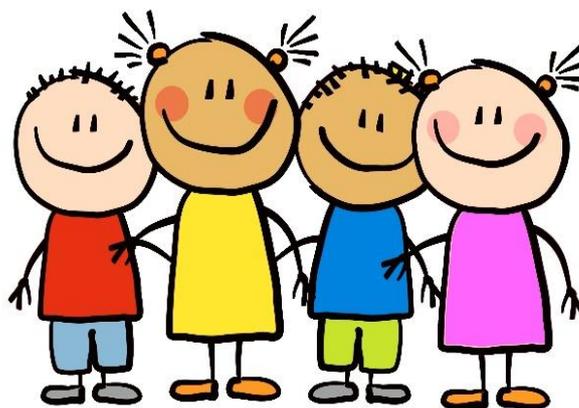
“If you were the teacher today, what would you have done more of or less of? Why?”

“Did you spend any time with kids from other classes today? When? What did you do?”

“What were some good/strong choices you made today?”

“Did you do anything today to show that you are your own ‘boss’ (e.g. of your feelings, actions)?”

“What work are you proudest of from today?”



SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING

"Play Is The Way"

PLAY IS THE WAY is a practical methodology for teaching [social and emotional skills](#) using guided play, classroom activities and an empowering language.

It is a process that gives primary schools a way to develop, improve and entrench the personal and social capabilities of students.

"Resilience, Rights & Respectful Relationships"

SEPS is a Lead School in the State of Victoria to teach the "Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships" curriculum. The **age-appropriate learning material** focuses heavily on personal and social capabilities. Lessons incorporate explicit teaching, group work, role-playing, partner sharing and personal reflection. The core concepts that will be taught in term one are 'Emotional Literacy' and 'Personal Strengths'.

Restorative Practices

The holistic development of each child continues to be supported through a range of appropriate and challenging learning programs that promote active participation. We utilise Restorative Practices when working with students at all times during the day. We use a range of strategies to support their Social and Emotional Wellbeing including restorative circles—check in circles and check out circles—to see how the students are feeling in relation to their learning and general wellbeing.

Buddies

Throughout this term, Level 6 buddies will regularly visit the Foundation children. The focus during these sessions will be on participating in hands-on activities that support the Foundation Literacy, Numeracy and Social / Emotional / Wellbeing curriculum. Children at both year levels thoroughly enjoy the Buddy program which extends beyond the classroom environment to the school playground.

Assessment and Reporting

Sandringham East Primary School strives to provide a rich, inclusive, student centred learning environment to support the holistic development of all children. Research indicates that learning is developmental; children learn in different ways, at different rates and at different times. At SEPS student learning is continuously monitored against the Victorian Curriculum F-10 achievement standards, tailoring learning experiences to address the needs of the child. Teachers make informed, on-balance judgements, based on evidence gained from a range of formal and informal assessment tasks and rich learning experiences.

Feedback to students about their learning is an important aspect of maximising student achievement. It has been described as "the most powerful single moderator that enhances achievement" (Hattie, 1999). To optimise the effect of student learning feedback contact between all stakeholders (students, teachers and parents) is imperative.

To support student learning, feedback needs to be:

Constructive - highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the completed task and information for

future areas of focus. **Timely** - delivered within a reasonable timeframe to benefit subsequent work. **Meaningful** - targeting individual needs and linked to specific assessment criteria.

As well as our Term 2 and Term 4 formal **Student Reports**, regular constructive feedback during the semester empowers students to monitor and direct their learning. Small teacher led groups occur across the day in each classroom. Teachers are continually making anecdotal notes and helping students set learning goals.

Student **Learning Tasks** will be disseminated to parents utilising COMPASS. Class teachers will upload a nominated student learning task each term. Additionally parents will be provided with a learning task from each of the specialist areas over the course of the year. The learning tasks will reflect a child's performance at a single point in time.

2023 Learning tasks are:

Level	Semester 1, 2023			Semester 2, 2023	
Foundation	T1	Investigations		T3	Writing
	T2	Science		T4	Maths
Level 1/2	T1	Investigations		T3	Writing
	T2	Maths		T4	Science
Level 3/4	T1	ERP		T3	Writing
	T2	Science		T4	Maths
Level 5/6	T1	Science		T3	Writing
	T2	Maths		T4	ERP
Specialists	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	
Art	Level 1&2	Foundation	Level 5&6	Level 3&4	
LOTE	Level 3&4	Level 1&2	Foundation	Level 5&6	
PA	Level 5&6	Level 3&4	Level 1&2	Foundation	
PE	Foundation	Level 5&6	Level 3&4	Level 1&2	

Specialists Term 1 2023 Overview

LOTE

In Term 1, the focus for Foundation and Level 1 students will be speaking and listening practice throughout the year. Lessons will include indoor and outdoor games, songs and hands-on activities. From week to week, words and phrases students have learnt will be repeated to help them remember. In Term 1, the vocabulary focuses on greetings, zodiac animals, numbers and family members. They will learn about Chinese New Year and culture, and Level 1 students will be introduced to Pinyin and start to 'Draw' Chinese characters. They will also learn some 'Traditional foods' in Mandarin.

Looking forward to a great year.

Mandarin Teacher – Zhao Lao Shi (Mrs Zhao)

Physical Education

This term at SEPS we will be setting the scene for PE at SEPS. Students will be focusing on how we move and experiencing movement in various ways. Specific focus will be on spatial awareness, participation and following rules during physical activity and game play. Lessons will include activities to develop their eye/hand and eye/foot coordination, fitness, balance, locomotion and **eye-tracking skills**. We will also be focussing on developing running, dodging, catching and throwing skills to set a strong path for future activities.

Looking forward to a great term.

Kate Foster & Dave Richardson

Visual Art

Get ready for a fabulous year of amazing art in 2023! In term one the focus for Foundation students will be to 'Start right in art!' We will learn our routines, mindfulness, basic techniques, and respectful interactions in art using strategies inspired by Adam Voigt and Play is the Way. All students will need to bring an art smock, old polo shirt or T-shirt, clearly named to protect their clothes, and these will stay at school for the year.

Foundation students will have some fun with the provocations of 'Colour' and 'Shape' as well as stories about animals and nature. New areas will be explicitly introduced each week exploring painting, collage, clay, and construction. They will set up their portfolios with a self-portrait and a stripes and spots colour challenge.

Love Art! Julie Van Etten & Jo Hemmings.

Performing Arts

A hearty welcome to our newest crop of performers! It's an exciting year to be starting their Performing Arts journey at SEPS, as they'll be debuting in their first school film/live performance extravaganza. Most won't be ready to tread the boards just yet though, so term 1 will be all about building our confidence as performers, strengthening our voices, learning to be collaborative story tellers, and understanding audience etiquette. That probably sounds like a lot of work (and it will be) but it will also be a lot of fun.

Johannes S