Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to 5/6H. We have enjoyed our first week together as a new class. The students are creating their classroom agreement and working with me on establishing a positive classroom and learning environment. You are welcome to visit our room and see the wonderful learning your child is doing throughout the year. I am really looking forward to working with you and your child this year.

The structure of the classroom:
Currently there are three stage 3 classes (5/6H, 5/6K and 4/5F). The formation of 3 stage 3 classes strengthens and enhances learning and teaching through the provision of authentic and rich educational experiences. Students in years 5 and 6 work within the stage 3 curriculum. The New South Wales curriculum is structured to allow for a natural progression of knowledge and skill acquisition through the learning continuum. Classes were specifically formed to support student’s transition to high school, to increase opportunities to develop leadership skills, to maximize each individual’s learning potential and to develop increase opportunities to work with a variety of peers and teachers.

The structure of the 5/6 class allows me to specifically develop, plan and implement lessons related to each student’s academic stage of development. Flexibility of student groups, lessons, support and enrichment programs will provide the students a variety of opportunities to engage in lessons with mixed peer groups and various teachers.

All stage 3 (year 5 and 6) stage 2 (year 3 and 4) teachers and support teachers formally meet on a regular basis to collaboratively discuss student and group learning targets, assessment criteria and learning programs.

Curriculum content:
ENGLISH (Reading, Writing and Talking and Listening)

This term our students will enter into the mysterious and magical world of Hugo Cabret. The Invention of Hugo Cabret by Brian Selsnick is an award winning book told in both words and pictures. The story takes the reader on a journey with a young orphan clock keeper and thief, twelve year old Hugo who lives in the walls of a busy Paris train station, where his survival depends on secrets and anonymity.

Students will explore the many layers and features of this book by considering some important questions and themes such as law and order, children’s rights and film making. This intriguing text will tie together learning in Literacy, Art and HISE.
Literacy Groups: Reading programs are tailored to the learning needs/strengths of individual students. The children will work in reading groups three times a week. Our classroom reading program includes silent, guided and modelled reading focusing on specific comprehension strategies, vocabulary and reading texts fluently. The “Super Six” reading strategies of predicting, making connections, visualising, monitoring, questioning and summarising will be explicitly taught throughout the year. Emphasis will be placed on the strategies of predicting, questioning and summarising this term.

- **Home reading:** Students are expected to read at home each day. Students will be encouraged to read longer texts as part of their home reading in order to develop skills to sustain understanding over a period of time. All students will have access to Reading Eggs online and can access this from home.

- **Writing** will be connected to the unit ‘State and Federal Government’. The literacy focuses include- factual recounts, procedural texts, summaries and information reports. The students will continue to develop their knowledge of persuasive texts (expositions and discussions). The grammar focus will be on sentence, paragraph structure and text organisation.

- Students will learn about the four forms of spelling knowledge, phonological (sounds), visual, morphemic (parts of words), and etymological (word origin) and complete a variety of activities throughout the week to consolidate their understanding. Students will also have access to Spellodrome online and will complete a number of set activities, tailored specifically to their individual needs, both at school and as part of their homework.

- **Talking and Listening** will be part of everyday work and will include discussions, reporting back and debating. Persuasive language will be taught explicitly this term and students will prepare a series of short persuasive arguments (speeches) to deliver to their classmates.

**MATHEMATICS- In 2015,** we will be teaching from the NSW Mathematics K-10 Syllabus

- The classroom program will provide opportunities for students to learn to describe and apply patterns and relationships; reason, predict and solve problems; calculate accurately both mentally and in written form; estimate and measure; and interpret and communicate information presented in numerical, geometrical, graphical, statistical and algebraic forms.

- Class-based activities will cover **Number and Algebra, Measurement and Geometry, Statistics and Probability.**

- During our daily Mathematics block, students will participate in whole class activities and small group investigations. Students will work individually, in ability based groups or as part of the whole class to further enhance and develop their mathematical understanding.

- Enrichment and Support Maths Groups: Once a week, students in 4/5H, 5/6H and 5/6K will work with Ms Harding, Ms Head, Ms French and Mrs Kovacs targeting problem solving tasks (including Maths Olympiad).

- **Mathletics** will be an integral component of the program and it is expected that students will complete regularly set Mathletics tasks on a weekly basis. The computer room is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday lunch breaks for students who are unable to access Mathletics at home.

- **Enrichment opportunities-** The Maths Olympiad program will commence in term 1 and will be coordinated by Ms Head. Students will need to complete an assessment task to qualify for a position within the Maths Olympiad team.
HUMAN SOCIETY AND ITS ENVIRONMENT (HSIE)

- HSIE will be a major focus of our term one studies. Students will learn about ‘State and Federal Government’. The unit provides opportunities for students to investigate the people and processes involved in legislative, executive and judicial functions of State and federal governments. The unit focuses on the responsibilities of different levels of government and how parliaments work. The unit will conclude with a three day excursion to Canberra.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- This term the Science content strands will be integrated into the HSIE unit ‘State and Federal Government’. The students will utilise knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes taught in HSIE to enhance and deepen their understanding of scientific concepts.
- Computer technology will play a large part in classroom activities. Stage 3 students will attend computer lessons at least once a week. These lessons will explicitly teach specific computer skills and provide students with the opportunity to practise developing ICT skills.
- Students will be expected to regularly participate in blogged discussion forums linked to themes covered in our classroom program.

CREATIVE AND VISUAL ARTS and PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT/HEALTH/PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PDHPE)

- These programs will continue to be run by Isobel Harding in the Creativity Centre. The sessions will be split into two parts where we will focus on Child Protection and then delve into a topic based exploration through the Literacy and Creative Arts Syllabuses.
- Our creative topic is CONNECTION! What are we connected to and why? How do we connect with living and non-living things? How do and can we connect with who we are and where we are? Are we always connected to something? Are we always aware of our connections? This is such an exciting topic with much to ponder deeply so we will be following its enquiry for the whole semester. We will explore literature that helps us to delve further in to the topic, use circle time, drama, team building and problem solving and a range of mixed media and building material to help explore the topic. I very much look forward to exploring the theme CONNECTION with your child and wondering where it will lead us all!
- With the Child Protection course of study, we will cover the themes Recognising Abuse, Power in Relationships and Protective Strategies with focus areas being; identifying safe and unsafe situations; feelings and warning signals; rights and responsibilities; safety strategies and networks of support.
- Sport takes place each Friday morning and activities include school sport, tennis, PSSA AFL and Softball.
CLASS TIMETABLE

- **Library:** Lessons will be on a Tuesday with Mrs Bowring. Please remind your child to pack their library bag and encourage them to borrow each week.
- **Language lessons:** Ms Petriella will work individually and small groups with students who have English as an additional language.
- **Enrichment programs:** A variety of programs (Maths Olympiad, Writers Group and debating etc) will be offered throughout the week to challenge and extend students.
- **Scripture:** Lessons are held every Tuesday afternoon.
- **Premiers Reading Challenge:** All students will be participating in this program. Please encourage your child to complete the challenge.

HOMEWORK

Students are expected to be prepared for class each day and to collect notes, return notes and money and to collect and return homework. When students are prepared for class, we are able to get to work earlier and spend more time learning.

- **Homework** reinforces key concepts the children are focusing on in class. It is very important that the children get into good routines planning, neatly completing and returning their homework within the correct timeframe. Homework will begin in week 4.
- **Homework** is handed out on a **Monday** and needs to be returned on **Friday** morning. It is the responsibility of the students to collect the homework tasks if they are absent when it is handed out.
- **A major component of homework is home reading.**
- **It is very important that children have several opportunities to read or be read to throughout the week.** Such opportunities not only enhance decoding and comprehension skills but also foster a love of reading.
- **Could you please ensure that your child’s homework book is covered (or in a folder) and that they take pride in completing work neatly. Please make the time to review your child’s work with them and sign the homework sheet once it has been reviewed.**

RESOURCES

Please send in the following with your child as soon as possible-

- USB
- Homework book or a display folder
- 2 whiteboard markers and cloth
- Packet of textas
- Coloured and lead pencils
- 2 red pens (for marking and ruling margins)
- Blue pens
- A glue stick
- A clear ruler (with millimetre measurements)
- Erasers
- Graphite pencils
- A box of tissues
Special Requests

- Remember to keep up to date with all school events via the school website. If you have not done so already, be sure to sign up to have the ‘Dacey Details’ delivered to you online.
- All absences have to be accounted for by an accompanying note.
- Any late arrivals to the office first to pick up a late card. Please try to be at school on time.
- Please make sure your child wears a hat every day.
- Please ensure your child has a healthy lunch each day including water and a piece of fruit/veggies for crunch and sip.

I like to keep you regularly informed about your child’s learning and events happening in the classroom. Please do not hesitate to contact the school office to make an appointment to see me if you have any questions or queries.

I am looking forward to an exciting and successful year. I look forward to meeting you all at the Parent Information session evening on Tuesday, 17th February.

Yours Sincerely,

Ms Belinda Head