Your kids are amazing!
Welcome to our first newsletter for 2014. We have been really impressed with how well the children have settled into the J Pod and have been thrilled at their positive attitude to learning!

It’s such a busy time of year where we get to know the children and begin developing relationships that will foster the students’ love of learning for the year and beyond. This, of course, cannot be rushed however tempting it is to throw a mountain of work at the children straight away! At the same time, we have been working hard to assess the students’ strengths and needs so we can target the learning for each child. It’s a bit like a duck swimming in water - calm on the top of the water (in the classroom with the children!) but legs working hard underneath to ensure things move forward at the same time!

We now have the children grouped for Reading, Maths and Writing and have begun focused lessons tailored to each of their needs. We are also running Mixed Ability classes where the children mix with students with varying skill sets so they can learn from and amongst each other. This ‘peer learning’ is such a powerful way for the children to learn.

As always, please come and organise a time to see us should you have any questions whatsoever. We are here to help and work with you to provide the best education for your children and so we welcome you to come and talk to us.

You can also email us at gwpslevel2@gmail.com and look at our blog to see what we are up to.
Linking Home and School

The learning link between home and school is vital to successful student learning. At this level there is an expectation that students will read regularly at home and that this will be written in the diary.

Diaries should be checked daily to enable communication with teachers and the diary, reading book and ‘soon-to-come’ Home Learning Tools Folder (see later in newsletter) should all live in your child’s SATCHEL which stays in their bag.

Students should have satchels from last year or else they can be obtained from the Main Office. Please ensure they come to school each day in your child’s bag.

Learning Tools Folders

Last year the J Pod students used folders in class containing resources in them to assist their learning. This year we will also send home a ‘Home Learning Tools Folder’. These will come shortly and will be a great link between home and school learning to inform parents and aid students in any work done outside of school.

Using Learning Tools Folders  Happy Learners!

Reading at Home

A vital part of your child’s learning at this level is the consistent reading practise they do at home to reinforce their learning at school.

There really needs to be a rigorous but ENJOYABLE home reading schedule so they learn to enjoy and understand their reading. Children who read regularly quite noticeably improve their reading skills and soon fall in love with books and reading.

As our CAFÉ reading program progresses at school there will be information on the CAFÉ strategies placed on the blog to assist parents and carers in helping the children when reading at home (please visit our blog and subscribe or let us know if you have any troubles).
**Daily Reading of Levelled Dot-books**
The children are already taking home Levelled Dot-books which should be swapped DAILY. At this stage, the books are from their reading level and should provide the children with an enjoyable reading experience. Understanding of their reading is a key aim during this time.

Once they are familiar with the process of reading and changing their Levelled Dot-books daily, we will introduce a second level of books which can be brought home should you wish to sit down and read a more challenging book with your child.

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**Book in the satchel, satchel in the bag!**

**J Pod Blog**
Last year was an amazingly interactive learning experience on the J Pod Blog! Have a look at the Zoo Excursion posts and comments to get a feel for how school and home learning can be linked with the real world through the blog.

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**Check out our J Pod Blog at:**


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**Mathletics and Reading Eggs**
Mathletics and Reading Eggs logons and passwords will soon be pasted into the diaries. Tasks will be set throughout the year depending on the topics being covered and students can of course go onto Mathletics and Reading Eggs at any time to practise their Maths and Reading skills.

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**Library & PE**
The students will be having a Library and PE session on Thursday mornings. Students can borrow books to be used in the classroom and at home. Books to be taken home will be placed in the students’ satchels.

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**Spelling**
This year spelling will be based on the Letters and Sounds program where students learn sound and letter patterns. This knowledge can then be transferred across words. We have been using this system for a number of years at Grovedale West Primary School but this year we have decided to base home spelling practise on this system as well. We are already teaching this at school this year and linking this to home will begin shortly.
Home Spelling and Maths Books
The Letters and Sounds spelling will also compliment the Spelling books that go home for you to use. These, and the Maths home book, are additional resources that can be used to reinforce your child's learning. They are resources that can be managed at home to compliment the work the students are doing at school.

Things to bring for the J Pod...
- Labelled hats for outside and labelled drink bottles for class.
- Materials for Discovery (eg. boxes) and a box of tissues would be much appreciated!
- Books: if you have non-fiction books appropriate for Discovery research that you no longer need, please let us know and we will see if they are suitable to be added to our Class Library. We have already started a small collection that students can quickly access as part of their Discovery research in addition to the general library collection.

Home Resources

Luke and Phoenix measuring and using 'Tens' and 'Ones'.

Ebony 'logging on'!

Bella measuring accurately!

Maddi and Mrs O, Austin and Lachie A