

# Foundation Community Learning Newsletter

**Staff Contact:**

Leah Morrow:  
lmorrow@stellamaris.  
catholic.edu.au

Claire Calleja:  
ccalleja@stellamaris.  
catholic.edu.au

Sarah Pace:  
space@stellamaris.  
catholic.edu.au

Patrick Torpy:  
ptorpy@stellamaris.  
catholic.edu.au

Janice McKay:  
jmckay@stellamaris.  
[catholic.edu.au](mailto:jmckay@stellamaris.catholic.edu.au)

## Welcome to Foundation

It has been wonderful to see our new Foundation students settling into school life as we partner with you on their learning journey. We thank you for preparing them for this exciting time and for the opportunity to learn more about your child at our 'Get to Know you Interviews'. We look forward to watching them grow as learners and individuals at Stella Maris. The following is an overview of the learning that will happen this term and some important information and notices. We welcome Mrs Janice McKay as the Foundation Wellbeing Coach. Janice's role will be to support children with their learning.

### **English**

We have begun the year with a heavy focus on teaching about the alphabet, including



recognition of letters and their order. Alongside this, students will be learning to write using correct letter formation and pencil grip. Students will also be involved in activities that will help them develop their pre reading and early reading skills, including repeating rhymes, hearing sounds, identifying letters, learning to point to one word at a time and locating words through the use of poems, songs and stories.

We will work to develop the skills of a good speaker and listener through daily interactions with each other, focussing on eye contact, voice projection, confidence and questioning skills. Structures will be set up to enable students to participate in our literacy sessions effectively, work co-operatively in small groups, share resources and complete tasks independently. Above all, the children will be encouraged to develop a positive attitude when they attempt to read and write.

## **Mathematics**

During Term 1 the focus for Mathematics learning in the Foundation Community will include number, data, time and pattern.

There will be a strong focus throughout the term on developing students' sense of number. This includes orally counting forwards and backwards, initially in the ranges 1-10, 1-30 and beyond. We will be recording numbers and making collections of various quantities within these ranges. Developing these basic skills early, will lay the foundation for all mathematics learning to come.



We have started the year with a focus on counting. The children will develop skills such as pointing to each object as they count and match numerals, words and collections. As the term progresses the students will be involved in workshop style sessions that will help to target their specific needs in number.

We will also be exploring how we can sort data and represent it in different ways. Students have been introduced to different ways of recording their thinking using diagrams, words and numbers.

We will then move into learning about time. Students will develop an understanding of language such as 'before' and 'after' and work towards sequencing their day from morning to night. At home, you could support this learning by practicing reciting the days of the week and talking about months and seasons.



## **THRASS**

This year we have begun THRASS, which is a tool for teaching learners about the letters, speech sounds and spelling choice of English. Our initial focus is teaching the alphabet, including recognition of letters and their order.

In finishing this term the students will begin learning about pattern by searching for and identifying patterns in our environment. They will use a variety of materials to copy, finish, create and extend patterns. We will again look at different ways of recording and develop language to explain mathematical thinking.

We look forward to working with you to develop your child's learning in mathematics.

### **Inquiry**

During Term 1 each member of the Foundation Community will be exploring what makes them an individual. They will think about what they like and learn ways that they can express themselves. Part of our learning will involve setting achievable short and long term goals and working towards these.

### **Religious Education**

Our first unit is called 'Praying to Jesus the Good Shepherd'. Through it we will focus on the ritual and special actions used during prayer time as well as the special symbols and objects used to set up a prayer space. We will engage in daily Meditation where we will learn how to be still and explore the significance of a Sacred Space. We will read and share the story of the Good Shepherd and reflect on people in our life who are caring and loving, like Jesus. We will

also learn about the season of Easter, including Lent and Holy Week.

### **General Information**

#### **8:50am lights out**

You may have noticed that lights are turned off and our rooms are dark first thing in the morning. This is because our school day begins with prayer at 8:50 each day and is an important part of our daily routine. Therefore, it is essential that children be at school on time ready to participate in prayer each day. Parents are welcome to stay and pray with us.

#### **Foundation Community Prayer night**

Our Foundation Community Prayer evening will be on Wednesday 17th May (Term 2, Week 5) from 6:30 - 7:30pm. Keep this night free, as it will be a wonderful time for parents and their children to experience prayer together.

#### **Wednesdays of Term 1**

A reminder that Wednesdays will continue to be 'rest days' until week 8 of Term 1. Children will begin attending on Wednesdays from March 29th.

### **Literacy Observation Appointments**

In order to gain a better understanding of where each Foundation student is in his or her learning and for us to plan personalised learning opportunities in the areas of English and Maths, we would like to observe and test students individually. To do this, we ask that parents book their child in for a 40-minute appointment with their child's learning area teacher on one of the following Wednesdays: February 15, 22, March 1st or 8th. Parents are not required at these sessions, and children will not need to wear their school uniform. Bookings can be made through the PTO booking system. Thank you to those of you who have already booked in your child.

## Teacher Planning

On Wednesday of week 8, Foundation Community teachers will analyse data results with our Literacy and Numeracy coaches. This information will then be used to assist us to plan ahead to meet the needs of our students.

## School Rules

Children will be learning the language of our school rules, what they are and what they mean. They will soon bring a book home about the school rules. Children will be encouraged to share their rules book with you. Please spend some time chatting to your child about the booklet.

## Foundation Learning Community Area

The Foundation community learning area is a shared learning space. This means that children sometimes work outside their learning area (classroom) and that evidence of learning may be displayed in this 'common learning space'. Take time to 'read' the walls and know what your child is learning about.

### Stella Maris' School Rules

1. Follow instructions
2. Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself
3. Speak appropriately
4. Listen to the speaker
5. Move safely
6. Take care of all property

## Lost Property

A bright pink tub is kept in the Foundation Learning area to store lost property. Please check it if you notice your child has mislaid any items. To ensure hats, jumpers, drink bottles, lunch boxes and even shoes are returned to their rightful owner, please name all items clearly.

## Birthdays

If you would like to share something for your child's birthday, a small, individually wrapped treat such as a lollipop would be appropriate. Being mindful of other children's allergies we do not encourage sharing of chocolates or cakes.

## Eating Times

Being the beginning of the year, children are given 20 minutes to eat their lunch (10:40 - 11am) in the morning and 15 minutes to eat their snack in the afternoon. However, although this should be ample time, we are finding that for many children it is not. If you recognise your child takes a long time to eat, perhaps you could encourage them to eat without being distracted and to eat more quickly.

## Tuckshop

Lunch order days are Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Lunches will be delivered in time for students to eat at 1:15pm. Please also provide your child with a morning snack on days they have a lunch order.

## Stationery Supplies

Thank you to those who have sent the requested supplies to school. We ask that you please bring in these stationery supplies to school if you have not already done so. We have very few scissors. Please remember to include a pair in your supplies.

## Timetable

Each week Foundation students will have a 1-hour PE lesson with our PE teacher, Georgia McLaren. For Arts lessons with Miss Emma, children will need to have their art smock. This will remain at school. In ICT classes with Miss Lauren children will learn computer and technology skills. Library bags have already been supplied to you. Thank you to all parents who have returned their library bags with the requested stationery supplies. Children will use these bags when borrowing from the library. Borrowing has begun for children who have had their library bags at school on Thursdays. Library bags will need to be returned to school each week with the borrowed book inside it, in order to borrow a new book.

## Medical Issues

Please see your child's teacher if information regarding anaphylaxis, asthma or any other medical issue needs updating.

## Learning Support

Ms Doreen has been allocated as the Foundation Community Learning Support Officer. She will work closely with the teachers, assisting to provide the children with personalised learning.

## Health Checks

The Primary School nurse will visit Stella Maris to administer free screening health checks for our Foundation students. We are unsure of the exact date at this stage.

