

Information Handout for Grade 1 parents.

What happens in grade 1?

We cover three learning areas:

- Language:

Home Language: English

Listening and Speaking, Phonics, Reading, Handwriting and Writing.

First Additional Language – Afrikaans:

Listening & speaking, and Incidental reading.

We will also informally be doing a Second Additional Language – Zulu with the Grade 1's.

- Mathematics:

Number Operations, Patterns, Space and Shape, Measurement and Data Handling.

- Life Skills:

Beginning Knowledge, Creative Arts, Physical Education, Personal & Social Wellbeing.

- Reading:

We use the “Look and say” method. That means the child looks at the word, reads the word and makes a visual picture of it. Every time he sees the word, he recognises the picture that the word is making. You do not spell or sound it out yet, because it will not mean anything to the child. The key of your child recognising the words quickly and effectively will depend on the number of times you allow them to practise reading the words to you. We start with 2 words a day, and we are starting with the “Pink New Way” series which is our class reader. A word sheet will be sent home – please paste the sheet on cardboard, and cut off the words as we learn them and put them in a money bag or container. Ziploc bags also works well. Some parents even like to laminate the sheets. These words need to come to school every day, because as soon as we know enough words, we start to build sentences at school. The words will be going home daily so that it can be reinforced at home. They need to find the words, pack it out and build it from left to right. The moment that they know all the words they get their 1st book. They start learning the vocab for the next reader (reading sheet 2) straight away after receiving the first reader and the same process follows in order to get the second reader. Each child will be reading at their own pace – if your child is able to learn quicker, they will get a reader sooner. But, we are not rushing to get through readers as fast as we can; we are concentrating on fluency and understanding. Your child must read to you daily and you need to please sign the reading card as well as the homework book. Your child will also receive an independent and fun reader which you can assist them with when they get to unfamiliar words.

Reading comprises of the following:

Shared reading – whole class, and interactive. We use big books to see enlarged text.

Group guided reading – Small group consisting of 6-8 learners on a similar reading level. The group will read together and learners will take individual turns with guidance and support from the teacher. Graded readers – work with the same readers for a couple of days.

Unprepared reading – unknown text is given to the child to read without practise. However, these are words we have covered in our spelling and reading sheets from the past so it shouldn't be all unknown to them. This indicates if your child can remember words taught to them known as memory recall.

- Spelling:

In class we learn the children that the alphabet letters “ay, bee, cee” are called Alphabet names and the Alphabet names make alphabet sounds in words. Remember we do not spell, but sound out the word – that means that we do not spell “cat” as “cee – ay – tea”, but as “c – a – t”. We will send the spelling sounds home – paste on cardboard and build words at home. The sounds are given to you to assist your child in learning the weekly spelling words. These sounds do not have to come to school, because we build with abacards. We do the same sounds in handwriting, so that they will be able to write out the words to reinforce the learning process. Dolch Words are your high frequency words which basically mean it's those words we use frequently in our writing. Please learn thoroughly because they will be tested and they are used in class daily. Dolch words also need to be taught the same way we learn the words for our readers (The “Look and Say” method). Take note that your child needs to be able to read, spell and write these words on their own.

- Writing:

We will send you a sheet with the correct letter formation – please ensure that your child starts at the correct place when they write.

Do not teach them to write in Capital letters, please.

We notice that some of the children are holding their crayons incorrectly. Please take note that your child should only use three of the five fingers to hold a pencil.

- Maths:

It is very important to count every day!

- Count on the chart (also recognise every number).
- Count objects in the house: teaspoons, books, lego blocks, buttons, etc.
- Understand before, after, in between, 1 more, 1 less , many, few, smaller, bigger, most, least.
- We are starting with oral sums, e.g. “I have 2 marbles, and I win 3 more – how many do I have?” (use fingers or counters).

- Homework:

The homework sheet needs to be in the homework book every Monday. The homework sheet will be uploaded onto the communicator and website every Friday, so print out a copy and paste it into your child's homework book over the weekend. Please do not leave homework up to the aftercare, as there might be important information for you, e.g. to send your child in P.E. clothes, to complete important letter and send back reply slips. You need to sign the homework book daily. This book is our means of communication and we welcome letters and notes from you, but please remind your child that there is a letter for us – as we cannot check every book every day – this is a Life Skill they need to learn! The books we will be using for homework this year are:

- Home Language – We use this book to do our weekly sounds in. Collect pictures that start with the sound from a magazine and paste. Practice forming of the sound on the next page.
- Mathematics – We use this book to extend on any concepts we dealt with in Maths.
- Sentence book – We use this later in the year to assist your child in constructing meaningful sentences.
- Tests will be written every Friday. It will include all sounds, words and mental maths done for the week. It will be all the aspects required to be done/revised in homework sheet as well

- Merits:

Merits are given for numerous things at the discretion of the teacher – good behaviour, good work, 10/10 for tests, recycling etc. Every 10 merits deserve a R7 Tuck shop voucher. It is an enormous task to always keep merits up to date and your child's teacher will try to give it to them a.s.a.p.

- Warnings:

This will be noted on the daily homework, as you might not look at the warning sheet every day. Please sign the warning. We try to give the little ones 3 verbal warnings before we give them a written warning. By the time they get a written warning, it is actually long overdue. Please have a chat with your child after every warning and explain to them that they need to make sure that they do not repeat the behaviour. You can also be the cause of warnings if you do not return reply slips, important letters or do not sign the homework repeatedly. Please do not question the teacher's decision in front of your child – rather write a note or phone if you have a problem.

- Books:
We will send the books home. You need to encourage, motivate, and praise your child. Please sign all books every time. We also encourage learners by giving stickers & positive comments.
- Reports:
At the end of each term a report will be handed out, and we will be having a Parents Afternoon on the 1st week of the new term. We use a new 1-7 point system. Take note
- Extra-Murals:
We try to encourage the little ones to do one extra-mural per term. They do find it difficult to go down to the field the first time. You are welcome to go with them if you can, but we will help them to their respected sport – they usually settle in very quickly. We found that our learners have a huge gross motor as well as fine motor problems. So, once again we encourage you to send your child to extra-murals.
- P.T (Swimming in Term 1 and 4):
Take note your child will be doing Physical Education three times in the 7-day cycle. It is encouraged to have at least more than one set of P.T. uniform as your child will be coming to school in the uniform on his/her P.T. days. The days in which your child has P.T. will be pasted into the homework book. Check the days your child needs to wear his/her P.T uniform daily to avoid your child coming with the incorrect clothing. In the first and fourth term we do one swimming (this is the day you send the swimming bag) and two field days. In the second and third term we have three field days. For swimming you will need a school costume, school cap and any towel. Learners come to school dressed in costume, P.E. T-shirt and shorts and white socks and takkies. Please send underwear with your child so that they can change out of their wet costume. Our school is a swimming school which means your child has to know how to swim. It is impossible to expect us to teach your child how to swim. This stays your responsibility to send your child for private swimming lessons if he cannot swim. Swimming and being safe in the water is a life skill he or she needs to be taught. Please note the activities done in the pool are assessed. We have two adults at the pool: Class teacher and our assistant teacher.
- Marked Clothes:
Every item must be marked – even the costume, cap and towel. If picked up it gets sent to the office and the child will be called to the office. If it is not marked, it will unfortunately be difficult to identify.

- Marked stationery:
Every single item must be clearly marked. Send an Ice-cream container to the school. Each learner must have a red bag and a numbered 1-100 whiteboard. This can be obtained from Mrs. Joubert, if not done already. Order forms can be obtained from the office.
- Birthdays:
Confirm with the teacher of how many learners are in the class. A kind request, no round uncut cream cakes – it is rather a messy task to cut the cake into 40 pieces! Small cupcakes or a little party pack will be great.
- Healthy Eating:
I would like to congratulate all our Gr. 1 parents for the healthy lunchboxes that are coming to school. We will not allow any chocolates, sweets, fizzy drinks or junk food from Mondays to Thursday. Please only allow your child money for a sweet on a Friday, or pack a sweet on a Friday.
- Interviews and meetings:
If you need to make an appointment with the teacher, the easiest way is go to the back of the homework book and write your request for a meeting on the one stating requested by parent. The teacher then will confirm the meeting or reschedule if she cannot make the meeting. If you have a problem, please speak to the teacher first. There will also be a “Requested Form” where the teacher can request a meeting and the same procedure will follow as explained above. The Grade Head will sit in on a meeting with you and the teacher, after that, Mrs. Pillay or Ms. Nel will sit in, and only after that Mr Jonker or Mr. Fourie. A meeting without the teacher in question will not happen. Minutes of meetings will be written and signed by all present.
- Money and letters:
You can make life easier for us by buying a pack of envelopes, write your child’s name and class on it to send money. Take note that it sometimes happens that we have more than one fundraiser at school for eg. we will have Gladiator Day and school photos, please to do not add the money up and send in one envelope, as most of the time its two different fundraisers and it goes to two different people.