Dear Families

This nine week term has been ever so quick. As happy as we are to have this break, there is much more planning as an admin team that we would have liked to have completed.

The term began rather damp with the school waiting an extra day before opening for the term. We were concerned that the Brisbane River, due to peak at midday on what was to be the official first day of the school year, was potentially concerning for having students transported. Come the second day we were up and running with students (and families too I am sure) so happy to be back at school.

We did receive some water damage to the new building extension, with ceiling tiles falling in from the weight of the water that came through the roof. This has been rectified throughout this term, along with most of the other identified defects. The two new classrooms and staff area are well utilised. The multisensory room, used for class space last year during the building program, is currently being refitted with equipment. Hopefully throughout term two it will become available for programs again.

The staff has been very active this term working on development of our school curriculum framework and aligning it with the Australian Curriculum. Professional development has occurred in the area of literacy in particular. All classes throughout the school have engaged with units of work surrounding books. The school has purchased a number of readers and library books and will continue to expend funds in this area throughout 2013.

This year is quite extensive for our community as we undertake our Quadrennial School Review (QSR). This which will assist set our directions for the next four years. As part of this process, we will also undergo a curriculum audit. This audit will occur in term three.

The majority of school classes have determined camp dates for the year. Approval has been provided from your P&C to engage in camps. Depending on a number of variables (age, health and staff availability) students will have camps ranging from an overnight at school up to 4 nights (usually our senior classes) away. A number of camps are booked for either the Sunshine Coast
or Gold Coast. Your P&C is currently considering how it can support camps this year to minimise financial costs to families.

In February we very excitedly and in voice to “The Wheels on the Bus” took possession of our new school bus. Sullivan Nicolaides, through AMAQ Foundation Qld donated the new commuter bus, complete with wheelchair hoist and electric step for our students to access programs in the community. This generosity ($75 000) has been overwhelming. Thank you to families able to join with us on the morning of the presentation and share morning tea together.

We have a number of new staff in the school this year- teachers and teacher aides. Classroom snippets in the newsletter will introduce you to all staff. We have had some staffing challenges throughout the term due to injury or illness. Thank-you for your understanding and support if your child’s class has been affected. We have attempted to keep disruption to a minimum and replacement teachers have continued the class programs and routines to maintain consistency for children.

It is concerning that illness has already had an effect for staff and students this term. Many staff will be having the flu injection through school in the near future. As with your children, when staff is unwell they too stay away until well, to reduce infection across the school. Thank you to parents who have also kept your children home when unwell. This assists greatly in reducing illness across the school. As you are aware, many of our children have reduced immune systems and are more susceptible to illness. I sent home a reminder last week regarding this issue.

Further to school staffing, the vacant Deputy Principal position at Red Hill Special School has been advertised and applications closed on Thursday March 21st. Interviews will occur throughout term two. Jacinta Xavier has been acting in this position since last year. The Deputy Principal position became vacant as a result of Kate Russ successfully gaining the Principal position at Rosella Park in Gladstone from the beginning of this year.

Many changes...... your P&C included. The AGM was held last Wednesday evening and a new Executive elected. It was lovely to see some new faces, along with familiar ones, at the meeting.

Your new P&C executive is:

**President:** Alistair Brown  
**Vice President:** Emma O’Donoghue  
**Secretary:** David Kingston  
**Treasurer:** Gerard Reardon

Congratulations to your newly elected executive. It is a very small P&C that works tirelessly to raise funds to support your children, their educational needs and the needs of our school. A sincere and heartfelt thankyou to outgoing President, James Donnelly, who provided a direction for the financial success of P&C over the past two years with the introduction of special events. The first event, “A Knight with Wayne Bennett” and last year,” An evening with Erin Brockovich” were highly successful. These evenings have raised awareness of Red Hill Special School outside of our immediate community. The benefits to our school have been numerous. Thank you James.
Our current P&C is preparing for this year’s fund raiser “An Evening with John Eales”. A flyer has been forwarded home and another printed within this newsletter. The P&C will forward further information in the new term.

To all families, thank-you for your continued support. Happy Easter. Have a safe holiday and see you in two weeks.

Pam

Classroom News

The ECDP staff, families and children have shared many experiences together as we welcome all our new families and returning families to school. We have had a very busy first term. The children have become acquainted with their new environment, staff members, peers, classroom activities and the playground areas they are using for play sessions.

Although many of our school days have been wet and overcast this term we have been able to access the new partially covered playground area. This area works nicely for the children as it allows them to play outdoors practising their skill development whilst keeping dry under cover.

Prep 1 has spent this term exploring the book “We’re going on a Bear Hunt”. Jo and her children have been enjoying the song to accompany the story as well as creating their own drawings of the grass, mud, snow and the Bear featured in the book. The students have been writing their own words, as well as writing sight words belonging to the story. As a final culminating activity the children participated in a ‘bear hunt’ within the school grounds.

Prep 2 has been focusing on the popular book, ‘The Little Yellow Digger’. As well as enjoying the very engaging storyline Caron and her students have been making lots of hands-on fun activities. They have reproduced the tracks and tyre marks made by the various vehicles in the story as they negotiated the mud and dirt patches after the rain periods.
Prep 3 has been focusing on the story “Who sank the boat?”. Jocelyn and her children have been learning the names of all the animals in this story and what happened on their adventure. The children painted all the animals from the story and made their own wall representation of the story in the classroom. Re-enacting the story proved to be very popular as the children chose to be one of the animal characters and retold the story from that viewpoint.

Pre-Prep 1 and Pre-Prep 2 have been settling very well into their daily timetable and whole day attendance. The students have been learning new greeting songs for ‘hello’ and ‘goodbye’ and playing ‘shoo fly’ to help develop eye-hand coordination skills. Our outdoor gross motor time was spent swinging, digging in the sand pit, bowling and throwing some bean bags into the basketball net. We have also enjoyed dress ups and climbing through our obstacle course. We are learning to share our toys and games and play successfully with our friends at school.

The students have been introduced to our Music Therapist Clancy. They thoroughly enjoy her song selection and array of musical instruments including chimes, wave drum, egg shakers, bells and rain sticks to name just a few.

We wish you all a safe and enjoyable Easter break.

Teachers: Caron, Jo, Jocelyn and Jill
Teacher Aides: Mary, Shelley, Deb, Danya and Eleanor

Junior 1

The new term started with a new classroom and some new members of staff. Aimee joined us for three days a week, as a teacher aide and Lea our lovely Dutch Student for 5 days. Both have settled well into the school routine. We also welcomed a new student to the class. Charlotte is settling in to the programme and making new friends.

Our main focus this term has been to explore all areas of communication, looking at language, literacy and literature. We have enjoyed looking in depth at new story books - The Gruffalo, The Owl who was Afraid of the Dark and Crunch the Crocodile. We looked at the illustrations and the words in the books. We wrote about each story and had great fun making collage pictures and characters out of play doh and salt-dough. The interactive white board has helped us to understand new letter sounds and writing words.
for our Word Wall and we have used new reading books to support our learning.

We have all enjoyed using the new outdoor play area, fondly referred to as The Oval and we have used it for Assemblies, Obstacle courses and Soft play fun, along with bike riding and bouncing on the Air Mattress. It has been wonderful to be able to use the space in all weather, especially in the rain which has brought a different dimension to our play sessions!

A highlight this term has been the start of swimming lessons on a Wednesday which we all enjoy. We have all become very confident, especially Minseo who will now get into the pool and loves the experience. Sensory play has been interesting as we have used all kinds of sticky, goopy liquids, pouring and scooping and modelling materials - trying our hands at sculpturing and collage What a lovely mess we made!

The last week of this term we have been looking at Going to the Dentist and brushing our teeth along with making Easter Chicks, bonnets and icing biscuits. We all enjoyed the Easter Fun Day on Thursday, especially the egg hunt. Delicious. Happy Easter Everyone!

Teachers: Hilary
Teacher Aides: Mary, Aimee and Lea
Junior 2

It has been a great start to the year for Junior Two. After the first two weeks getting to know each other and talking about our holidays we have worked hard and enjoyed lots of reading. The books we have covered are The Gruffalo, Crunch the Crocodile, and The Smartest Giant in Town. Our classroom walls are covered in some of our fantastic writing and art work about these books.

In mathematics this term we have been looking at comparing items. We have looked at things that are smaller and bigger, the same or different, and which groups have more or less.

In Social and Personal Development we have been practising our sharing and communicating by taking turns with others and playing with toys and games, such as Mr Potato head and Lego.

Every second Monday we have started going to Splitz Gym. This will continue into next term. The sponge pit is our favourite. We love to jump on the trampoline and into the pit or hang from the bars and fall into it. We have been swimming on Wednesdays and we all love our time in the water.

Earlier this term we were lucky enough to have the NRL All Stars come and visit us at school. We had lots of fun playing with them and they taught us some football skills.
We wish you a very happy Easter and a safe holiday,

**Teachers:** Nicole  
**Teacher Aides:** Alyssa, Nicole, Michelle and Sheridan

**Junior 3**

It’s hard to believe that term 1 of 2013 is already over! We have been super busy getting to know each other and learning through the following stories - The Gruffalo, The Rainbow Fish and There was an Old Lady who Swallowed a Fly. Students have done a range of literacy, numeracy, art and communication activities based around these stories.

We always look forward to our swimming day on Wednesday when we have a lot of fun in the pool! Each student has an individual program to develop their swimming skills, build and stretch their muscles. On Wednesdays we also have a lot of fun with sensory play when we join Junior 1 & 2.

Maisie and Will play with the characters from the Gruffalo!

A favourite activity of the week for the students has been our trip to Pinjarra Hills for horse riding.

Sensory play fun!
Leah and Aimee having a great time on the trampoline!

Have a great and safe holiday!!!

Teachers: Amanda
Teacher Aides: Holly, Jenni, Aimee, Sheridan and Kelly

Junior 4 & 5

Juniors Four and Five have had a productive, creative, explorative and fun filled start to the year! We have been able to settle nicely into our new classrooms and the daily routines are running smoothly. We believe in building positive relationships with the students we work with and endeavour to maintain and strengthen these each and every day through communication, support and a caring nature.

We started the term exploring the first letter of individual student’s names. We talked about A for Abbey and Adania, C for Corey, F for Fred, G for George, H for Hannah and J for James. We are steadily making our way through the alphabet and next term we will be exploring M for Matty and R for Rolly. We integrated activities of sensory exploration, art and storytelling using various materials and technologies. This term has had a focus on literacy and we have enjoyed integrating the texts ‘Look See, Look at Me’, ‘Who Sank the Boat?’ and ‘Where is the Green Sheep?’ into our program. The reading of the books has been accompanied by various sensory and art based activities to help with our enjoyment and comprehension of the text. Students have also used programs such as Clicker 6 and Boardmaker Studio to create recounts and comment on the stories. Our classroom displays show our marvellous work in incorporating these texts into the class program.

We have also dived headlong into our regular programs such as swimming on Wednesday, and horse riding on Friday. It has been wonderful to see the students gaining confidence and develop their gross motor skills during these activities. After a very delayed start (due mainly to the inclement weather we experienced this term!) we have commenced our weekly outings to Roma Street Parklands, which has been enjoyed by staff and students alike. This week we had a particularly lovely time searching for Easter Eggs in the beautiful parklands!

As always, the first term has flown by and it is hard to believe that the school holidays are upon us already. It’s always a big job getting the year started and settling into the routines, and we couldn’t do it without our wonderful teacher aides. Thank you to the wonderful staff that work with each and every student to engage, encourage and motivate working toward the child’s individual goals. The efforts of our teacher aides and therapists are invaluable and their dedication to their role is highly appreciated.
We hope that all families have a lovely break with time to rest and recuperate in preparation for another fun-filled (but always hard working) term two. We are all very excited about our school camps which will be occurring next term. See you then!

**Teachers:** Caya and Kate  
**Teacher Aides:** Stephanie, Pauline, Criddy, Michelle, Amelia and Sonya

What an amazing start to Term one. It has been wonderful to see all the boys settle in, particularly our new student Tom, who joined us from Victoria. Our focus this term has been embracing literacy, at each student’s individual level. We have been immersing the students in all things literacy-writing, reading, being read to, listening to and engaging in stories on the iPad or Interactive Whiteboard. We have been experiencing the different stories through sensory elements as well. Our class books this term have included Hairy Maclary from Donaldson’s Dairy, Do Your Ears Hang Low and Blue hat, Green hat. The stand out favourite this term would have to be Hairy Maclary. The students adored reading...
and engaging with this book either with a teacher, friend, or through other methods such as the interactive iPad apps.

Our classroom began to take shape with all the wonderful activities and art work the students created each week. In staying with the literacy focus, we have introduced a letter of the week. Each week we learn, discuss, and explore a different letter of the alphabet. It has been exciting to observe all the students working at their individual pace and participating to the best of their ability in the different activities, which are presented through a multi-sensory approach.

We have continued to work on other programs which include: horse riding, music therapy, lifestyle sport, cooking, gross and fine motor, art, functional maths skills as well as the communication, academic and individual goals for each student.
Although it has been a short term, it has been a busy one and I anticipate the next to be the same with many more shared experiences and exciting activities and programs to participate in.

I wish everyone a safe and happy Easter!

Teacher: Casey
Teacher Aides: Megan, Seb, Kelly, Sam, Caitlin and Tim

Middle 2

Lily, Will, Troy, Seth and Darah have all settled in well together as a group. We have been exploring words and concepts via the mediums of music and stories. The stories we have explored are “We’re going on a Bear Hunt,” “Blue Hat, Green Hat,” “Wonky Donkey,” “Where is the Green Sheep?” and “Wombat Stew.” Through these stories we have undertaken exercises, used iPod apps, played the story out as an interactive story. We have engaged in art activities, maths activities and literacy activities, all incorporating words and concepts from the stories. Similarly, we have been learning how to choose our favourite songs and computer games, demonstrating what we understand and what we like the best as well as indicate our preferences.

Our other fun activities which involve developing fine and gross motor skills are: horse riding, cooking and swimming. Our IEP goals are also progressing. Seth is learning to transfer his weight, Lily is demonstrating choice making, Troy is using his choice board to indicate free time preferences, Will is learning to eat finger food with one hand and use a spoon, and Darah learning to use a different cup and a spoon to just name a few.

We are having a great year and expectations are high for having fun and attaining personal goals.

Have great holiday!!

Teacher: Nicki
Teacher Aides: Deb, Belinda, Sonya and Christine

Seniors

Term One has seen the Senior students begin another year of new learnings, social interactions and continuation of our journey. This term we’ve had lots of wonderful and enthusiastic people in our room to assist us. This has included our lovely teacher aides - Jenne Walter, Lisa Conway, Julie Roderick, Glenis Long and Tim Searle and volunteers Faye Briggs and Jane Wright. Chana Peacock has joined us each Thursday. We’ve had visits from students of Brisbane Boys Grammar. We’ve also had the pleasure of welcoming Sabrina Lengsfeld, a student teacher, every Thursday and Tamara Tennant from Brisbane Institute of Tafe who helped us make our beautiful clay pots.

Both classes focused on the enjoyment of literature and reading this term, by studying some wonderful books. Senior 1 has read ‘Time
For Bed’ by well-known Australian Author, Mem Fox. We spent time exploring the rhythmic language of the book and enjoyed many and varied sensory lessons taken from concepts within the book. We’ve read ‘Best Friends Special Friends’ by Susan Rollings. This book was a wonderful springboard for lots of learning and sensory experiences around the topic of friends. Finally we’ve enjoyed the book ‘Pizza Today’ by RAPS (Reading Activities Project for Older Students). We used this book to explore a variety of foods to feel, smell, taste and cook- including savoury and sweet pizza’s. Throughout all of these books the repetitive rhyming pattern of the language enabled us all to build on the interactions and relationships with students while reading the books together. Class books were made showing photos of different activities participated in during the learning sequence of each book. We continue to read and share these Class books with the students each day.

Among others, Senior 2 has read ‘Diary of a Wombat’ by Jackie French. Leading to discussions of the days of the week and what we do during each day. Some students have been writing their own diaries. We have been looking at sounds and letters in our names and those of our friends and recognizing rhymes and sounds in spoken words.

Students have been busy assisting us in the classroom with small jobs - taking the Laundry basket to the washing room, recycling duties, washing up and taking notes to the office. This is a great way to work on our communication goals.

Some students have visited New Farm Park and enjoyed the time exploring different textures and experiences at the park. Our other programs have continued throughout the term- swimming, music therapy and movement programs. Next term we will continue with our outings to New Farm Park as well as some small group visits to a variety of community activities. A big thank you to our therapists Dave, Kath and Melissa who have assisted us with programming.

All enjoyed a busy term and we’re looking forward to another term of fun, laughter and learning.

Unfortunately Lisa received an injury to her foot and has needed to take leave. Kerrie has joined the class as her replacement. We wish Lisa a speedy recovery.

Enjoy your Easter break.

Teacher: Therese, Rachel, Kerrie and Chana
Teacher Aides: Jenne, Lisa, Julie, Glenis, Tim and Christine
Volunteers: Faye and Jane