

GRADE 3 2012



Welcome to Grade Three! Thank you to all parents who attended the important Grade 3 Orientation meeting this week. We enjoyed meeting with and chatting to you.

This is an important year as it is the final stage of the Foundation Phase. We endeavour to encourage independence, responsibility, task orientation, critical thinking and research skills (including the use of a dictionary), while having lots of fun and working cooperatively with others. We have summarised some key issues pertaining to the year, and hope that our Grade 3 parents and friends will find this guide helpful.

Grade Three teachers

The Grade 3 teachers and their classes are as follows :

- 3.1 **Mrs Jenni McMinn:** Foundation Phase Head (jmcminn@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za)
- 3.2 **Miss Jenna Markwell** (jmarkwell@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za)
- 3.3 **Miss Teagan Kingwill:** Grade Three Leader (tkingwill@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za)
- 3.4 **Miss Candice Harding:** (charding@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za)

Times of the School Day

School starts at 08:00 each morning and children are requested to be at school by 07:55 at the latest. The school day ends at 14:30 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. On Monday and Friday Grade 3's end their school day at 13:00. There are two breaks, at 10:35 – 10:55 and at 12:55 – 13:20. Please note that children need bring enough lunch to last for the extra break on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Assembly

The Grade 3's line up outside the hall every morning. On Mondays and Tuesdays we will start the day with an assembly in the hall. On Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays the teachers will meet the children in the lines at the hall and lead them straight up to the classrooms to begin the school day (i.e. no assembly for Foundation Phase on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings).

Children are requested to line-up in an orderly way when the bell rings at 7:58. Due to the restricted space on the quad, no ball games may be played in the quad outside the hall in the morning before lining up.

Please note that NO children may spend time in the passages before school. Bags may NOT be taken up to the classrooms before lining up at the hall.

On rainy days, children are to proceed straight to their classrooms on arrival at school in the morning.

School Lunch and Tuckshop

Please ensure that your child brings a healthy, filling lunch to school (e.g. bread / roll, fruit and fruit juice). We strongly discourage sweets, chips and fizzy drinks as part of school lunch, and will not allow these to be eaten on the mat during “brain food” (09:20) or “eating time” (10:20). It is possible, on a termly or daily basis, to order lunch from the tuckshop. You will receive a letter about this from Mrs Di Shaw, who runs our tuckshop. Children may buy snacks and drinks from the tuckshop during second break.

Please avoid sending large sums of money to school with your child for the tuckshop. We cannot accept responsibility for money which goes missing. Also, the tuckshop queues are long and the children miss out on precious playing / socializing time.

Parent – Teacher Meetings

In the second week of the **first term** there will be an orientation evening for all parents with your child’s teacher (16th of Jan). You will be invited to visit your child’s classroom from 08:00 – 08:30 later on in the first term (2nd of Feb). Please make every effort to share that special time with us. The Grade 3 teachers will meet with all parents in each classroom towards the end of the first term (20th of March).

Towards the end of the **second term** individual parent-teacher interviews will be scheduled (starting from the 18th of June).

During the **third term**, teachers will make appointments to meet with parents if necessary. We will also invite you to visit the classrooms from 08:00 – 08:30 in order to share with your child some of the special work he / she has been doing (see Year Planner for date of third term classroom visits)

We strongly encourage communication and interaction between parents and teachers. Please feel free to make an appointment to see us by writing a note in your child’s Homework book, or via e-mail.

Assistance with Book Covering

We are constantly adding to our selection of English and Afrikaans reading books and would appreciate offers of help with covering these books (plastic will be provided). Please e-mail your child’s teacher or write a note in the Homework Book if you would be prepared to cover a set of books (usually about 10) from time to time. The books will be sent home with your child to be covered, at your convenience, in the comfort of your home! This assistance is greatly appreciated.

Reading

Grade 3 learners are well on the way to becoming fluent, efficient, avid readers. However, please do not stop reading the important, irreplaceable “bedtime story” – this is an important chance for you and your child to share a special time together. Children will bring home individual readers, as well as group readers and later, Afrikaans readers.

You will notice that many children now have rather long “chapter books” as individual readers – these are not expected to be read in a night! The child should read \pm 5 – 10 pages a day until he / she has completed the book. Also, the individual readers can be read silently at home, with just a page or two being read aloud. You, the parent, can then ask your child a few questions about the story to check whether he / she has comprehended what has been read. Some homework reading takes the form of reading information sheets or poems linked to our current theme. These will be brought home in the “Theme Reading” file.

All reading books should be brought / returned to school every day. It is imperative that the protective plastic book bag be used to prevent books from becoming damaged / wet.

A great “reading motivator” is to allow your Grade 3 pupil an extra 15 minutes before “lights out” at night, provided this time is used exclusively for reading. Please make use of the public library and ensure that your child is given a choice of the books he / she would like to borrow from the library. Children are given an opportunity to borrow books from the Sweet Valley library during their Library lessons taken by Mrs Senogles. Although these books are stamped to be returned after 2 weeks, we request that they are returned after 1 week, if they have been read.

Afrikaans reading will start during the first term. The reading books and “Theme Reading” sheets will consolidate vocabulary and sentence structures being covered at school. Please give your child lots of opportunities to “show off” and re-read the Afrikaans material to all the members of the family – the more practice the better!

Reading Helpers

We shall require moms (or dads / grannies, etc!) to help with reading on various days. You will receive a letter about this. Please return the reply slip to school should you be available to assist in this way

Spelling

We work through a structured spelling programme every day from Monday to Thursday. This programme includes phonic families as well as high frequency sight words and word games and puzzles. Vocabulary enrichment is also encouraged by introducing and discussing idiomatic expressions. As part of our weekly computer lesson, the children practise and revise the weekly spelling words in the form of computer spelling games and puzzles. A short spelling and dictation test is done each Friday, when the week’s spelling (and Afrikaans ‘spel’) is tested, along with Mathematics. These tests help the teacher to identify children who need more revision and practise to consolidate certain areas we have covered. General classwork, as well as individual and group projects are also monitored closely, as these are important indicators of each child’s progress.

Afrikaans and Xhosa

Afrikaans phonics, oral and written work is done this year, in addition to Afrikaans reading. Please point out Afrikaans / Xhosa notices / signboards in shopping centres or along the road, to expose your child to the additional languages as much as possible. Also, try to find simple Afrikaans library books to read at home and speak Afrikaans with your child sometimes, if you are able to do this! The emphasis in Xhosa (our 2nd additional language) is on oral communication skills.

Mathematics

As well as moving into higher number ranges this year, we work on formal multiplication (times tables!) and division. The following “times tables” are taught in Grade 3: 2x, 10x, 5x, 3x, 4x, and 11x. When started, later in the first term, these must be practised every day. Problem-solving and investigating number patterns and relationships are an integral part of our Mathematics programme. Please provide your Grade 3 child with plenty of opportunities to practise telling the time on both analogue and digital watches and clocks – the children need to be able to tell the time and to use this skill when solving problems.

Munchie Market

Our weekly “Munchie Market” forms part of our Mathematics programme. Each child is allocated one day on which to bring and sell some home-made ‘goodies’ to his / her peers (priced R1.50). The seller is responsible for giving change (he / she should bring along a float), and may keep the proceeds of the sale of his / her goodies. Some children kindly choose to donate a portion of the proceeds of their sales to our grade charity (see paragraph regarding “Grade Charity and Outreach”)

Phys Ed

Grade 3 learners will have two 30 minute sessions of Phys Ed a week. The children are to arrive at school wearing PE togs on those two days (see uniform guidelines in Homework Book for correct Phys Ed dress.) Parents will be informed via the homework book when swimming will take place. We also encourage physical fitness, gross motor skills and fun by using the Sweet Valley 1km activity circuit during the school day at least twice each week.

Music

Each Grade 3 class has one 30 minute music lesson per week. Recorder (with Mrs Bates) and singing / percussion (with Mrs Parkinson) will take place on alternate Tuesdays. The children must take responsibility for packing their recorder every Monday evening and for practising their recorder playing regularly in preparation for their fortnightly lesson.

Homework

Grade 3's must spend a structured 20 minutes each day doing homework (to prepare them for the Intermediate Phase). The homework book must be brought home, signed by a parent when work is completed, and returned to school every day. Children whose homework has been completed at after-care should also have the homework book checked by a parent each day, as there are frequently messages / notices in the homework book for the attention of the parent(s). Reading, spelling, number bonds (and later times tables) are done every day. Stationery should be checked regularly and certain items replaced as / when necessary.

The homework book may be used for correspondence / messages between home and school.

Class Representative

Each class will have a "class rep" who will contact other parents on the teachers' behalf to schedule parents to help with reading and other class activities, arrange work parties, etc. In anticipation we would like to say "Thank You" to the parents who will offer their time to fulfill this important role. We know that our parents will, as always, give them their full support and co-operation.

Sun Protection

Please encourage your child(ren) to apply sunscreen before school each morning. Please note the official Sweet Valley sunhat is compulsory for outdoor play at break, and will be kept at school.

Class Themes

Please read the "Foundation Phase News" which will appear in alternate newsletters, to keep up with news of our current themes, etc. and encourage your child(ren) to explore these themes at home / when visiting the library. Some of our themes lend themselves to fun, exciting family outings and discussions.

Extra Murals

Please consult the extra-mural list (available on the website) which will be brought home to identify the various activities available to your child (extra copies of these lists are always available from the secretary). Please encourage your child to participate in at least one summer and one winter activity.

Money sent to school

Please make sure all money sent to school is sent in a sealed envelope, clearly marked with your child's name, grade and the purpose for which the money is intended. Money should be handed to the teacher first thing in the morning. School fees and lunch club money must be placed in the box in the foyer, clearly marked, and not handed to the teacher.

Marking of child's possessions

Please ensure that every single item of clothing, stationery, etc. belonging to your child is clearly marked with your child's name before it is brought / worn to school. Please ensure that you keep up this practice throughout the year, when items are replaced. There is a lost property cupboard in the Grade in the Grade 4 passage, where lost goods can sometimes be found. Teachers cannot take responsibility for childrens' belongings, although the greatest care will be taken to avoid loss / breakage. Please encourage your Grade 3 child to be responsible for his / her belongings in the classroom, on the playground and on outings.

Medication at school

Should your child need to be given medication (eg antibiotic) at school, we will do so, provided:

- The medication is sent in a packet with the child's name on it.
- A letter is received from the parent stating
 - Instructions/ directions / dosage
 - Time medication needs to be given
- A medicine spoon is provided.

Credits / Discredits

Grade 3 – 7 learners are awarded “credits” by their educator to recognise / reward good behaviour, effort, kindness, personal neatness and co-operation. Discredits are sometimes given when learners have not co-operated or have neglected their duties (including homework). Each week, each learners' credits are totaled, and the learners are rewarded for earning many credits. The pupil earning the most credits in the class has his / her name read out in assembly and thus scores points for his / her house, towards the House Trophy which is awarded at the end of each term. The six children in each class who have accumulated the highest number of credits in each particular week are rewarded with 10 minutes of extra break on a designated day.

Birthday civvies

Foundation Phase children are afforded the privilege of wearing civvies to school on their birthday (or a school day close to the birthday should it fall on a weekend or during the school holidays).

Birthday civvies may not be worn on first or last day of term, when formal assemblies are held.

We will allow the birthday boy / girl to distribute birthday treats (to be eaten during break time), should they wish to do this.

Birthday invitations needing to be handed out at school must be handed to the class teacher.

They must be in plain white envelopes with only the child's name written on the front of the envelope. The class teacher will ensure that invitations are placed in the postboxes of the relevant children along with routine “post” being distributed on that day.

Outings

We will require parents to lift children to and from outings.

Gr 3's meet at and leave from Wesley Road, at the staff parking area gate. Please ensure that children are strapped into seatbelts and that they behave appropriately in your vehicle. We request that parents helping with lifts adhere to the speed limit and exercise the utmost caution in transporting their precious cargo! A copy of the Sweet Valley outing policy as well as cell phone numbers of all the parents assisting with lifts on the specific outing will be given to lifting parents.

Grade Charity and Outreach

The Grade 3's support TEARS (The Emma Animal Rescue Society). Throughout the year we will endeavour to raise the childrens' awareness of this worthy cause and to encourage them to support it in various ways. Please consult our notice board outside the Xhosa room, and feel free to visit TEARS at their premises in Lekkerwater Rd, Noordhoek, or to browse their website. The Grade 3 learners also prepare a short programme of spring song, music and dance to present to the elderly residents of Plumstead Rusoord and Bergridge Park at the end of the third term.

We are looking forward to teaching your child(ren) this year and do hope that it will be a memorable, happy one. Please make every effort to stay in close contact with the school and your child's teacher throughout the year.

Grade 3 Teachers

