Dear Parents,

Welcome back to another exciting year at Yeerongpilly. It has been lovely to welcome back families from last year and wonderful to meet our new families beginning with us this year.

The first week of the group program was very smooth, a few tears as would be expected and lots of smiles and stories to share. We have also enjoyed seeing all our playgroup families back catching up over a cuppa.

For children attending the group program please remember to send a named hat for your child each day, as well as spare sets of clothing (water, sand and paint can be messy!) While water is available to drink, your child may drink more if they have their own (named) water bottle.

If anyone has some old hats they could donate to be used as spare hats for the children it would be very much appreciated.

We aim to encourage healthy eating habits at Yeerongpilly, but we are aware that some children may have very specific diets. Please be aware that nuts (including Nutella) are discouraged at school.

Don’t forget the Yeerongpilly Parent Handbook is available on our website. Click the link below for an electronic version or ask at the office for a hardcopy.


Staff News
A warm welcome to new staff starting with us in 2016, Elaine O’Dea (Teacher) and Kylie Davidson (Teacher Aide).

We also have a staff change to let families know about. Due to health reasons related to her back, Maree Carew (Teacher in the bilingual group with Pauline) will be taking leave until the end of this year. I am very pleased to announce that Elaine O’Dea will be stepping into the role as co-teacher in the bilingual room with Pauline from the 18 February. Elaine has extensive experience as a teacher, including working in the bilingual program at Toowong. This staff change will have an impact on the individual sessions as Elaine was working with families attending individual sessions on Fridays this year. Sheridan will be in touch with the families that were scheduled to see Elaine so alternative sessions can be arranged.
Past Students
Last year we farewelled 20 children who transitioned to Prep! One of our students featured in the newspaper article below.

Anthony White gets his lunch box ready for his first day at school as his mum, Rebecca Campbell, and sisters Myaisha and Makayah watch on. Picture: JOHN GASS

Anthony all for learning

ANTHONY White could not wait to start school at Warrigal Road State School this year. And the five-year-old is not going to let a severe hearing loss stop him from doing everything the other children do.

His mother, Rebecca Campbell, said her son would attend the Eight Mile Plains school because it had a hearing-impaired unit.

She said she was less anxious about her son starting school because one of her two daughters, Makayah, also had a hearing impairment and had paved the way. "I know what to expect now," she said.

"I was really stressed about Makayah starting and how she was going to cope, about whether she would be able to hear the teacher and how it would all work. "Makayah was also anxious whereas Anthony can't wait to go to school – he'll be the kid who says 'bye mum' while I am crying."

Anthony said he was looking forward to playing, eating strawberries for lunch, singing and running.

"I can run very, very fast," he said.

Warrigal Road State School principal Karen Coombes said the school specialised in supporting students with verified hearing impairments and had about 30 students enrolled in the program.

Newsletter
Our newsletter is available for families in the written form electronically or as hardcopy. An Auslan version is also available on our website. We will be asking parents which version of the newsletter they would prefer to access so we can ensure everyone is able to be up to date with what's happening at Yeerongpilly.

Auslan Classes for Parents
Tracey, Amanda and/or Elisa will present weekly Learn-to-Sign classes on Tuesday and Friday mornings at 9am before Playgroup and Thursday afternoons at 1:30pm before Group program pick up.

Australian Hearing Visit
An audiologist from Australian Hearing visits our centre approximately once per month to make ear moulds, supply batteries and discuss audiological issues with staff and parents. The next AH visit is scheduled for Friday 11 March from 9am to 11am.
Raffle
Thank you to all our families that sold tickets last year for our Christmas Hampers. The raffle raised $962, this is an amazing effort. The money will go towards a new storage shed to house some of the wonderful new resources we were able to purchase at the end of last year.

Medication Policy
If your child requires medication while they are attending our group program it is vital that the following steps are followed:

1. Authorisation to Administer Medication form must be signed by the parent for short term medication OR signed by a doctor for long term medication use.
2. Both prescription medication and over the counter medication must have a pharmacy label with the child's name and dosage.
3. Medication must be given to a staff member to be stored in a locked space.

Parent Information Sessions 2016
All sessions run in the playgroup room from 9:30 to 10am, morning tea is provided. All families are welcome to attend

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Parent Information Session</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday 12 February</td>
<td>Deaf Sport Opportunities with Jamie Howell Deaf Sport Australia Female Athlete of the Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 26 February</td>
<td>HICTI Therapy Services: An Overview with Jen McKee from HICTI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 15 March</td>
<td>Note: All HICTI sessions are the same</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 18 March</td>
<td>Please choose your preferred session date</td>
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<td>Tuesday 22 March</td>
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Playgroup
In 2016 we are continuing to offer playgroup on Tuesday and Friday mornings. To accommodate our timetables, playgroup will start and finish a little earlier. Playgroup will run from 9.15 to 11.15am. Playgroup alternates each week between a Toddler playgroup and Baby playgroup; offering families a fortnightly playgroup for their child. If you are not sure which playgroup to attend please discuss with your child's teacher. Playgroup is coordinated by Natara (Teacher of the Deaf) with the assistance of Marsha (Educational Interpreter) and Amanda or Tracey (both Auslan Language Models). Therapists (Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Speech Pathology) also regularly attend.

Playgroup provides parents with an opportunity to get to know each other, share experiences, encourage social skills for the children and also provide specific information about hearing loss, general childhood information and Auslan. Parent mentors and Deaf mentors from Deaf Children Australia also regularly attend playgroup.

Playgroup flyers are available from the office or your child's teacher. Our playgroup dates are also available online at our website. See link below.

https://yeerongpillyecdp.eq.edu.au/Calendarandnews/News/Pages/Playgroup.aspx
2015 Book of the Year Awards
Recently Speech Pathology Australia in conjunction with the State Library of Queensland and Queensland Government announced the winners of this wonderful award which raises awareness of the importance of reading for language and literacy development and the important role speech pathologists play assisting this process. The winner of the birth to 3 years was Snail and Turtle are Friends by Stephen Michael King. The winner of the 3 to 5 years was Teddy Took the Train by Nicki Greenberg.

Voluntary Financial Contribution
Yeerongpilly is a State Government facility resourced to provide a core educational service with no cost to families. To enhance our programs parents may choose to make a voluntary financial contribution towards the costs of arts and crafts supplies and cooking materials.

A suggested guideline for the contribution is $10 per term for families accessing individual sessions and playgroup, and $20 per term for families accessing the group program.

Envelopes for payment are available from the office or your child’s teacher.

Term Dates
The last day for Term One is Thursday 24 March. Term 2 commences the week beginning Monday 11 April.

We look forward to an exciting term ahead.
All the staff at Yeerongpilly ECDP