

# **Parent Information 2009**

## *Curriculum*

The curriculum at school is based on the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS). At level One (Prep) the focus is largely on foundational literacy and numeracy skills and the development of physical, personal and social capacities. Within the Standards, there are three core **strands**.

- **Physical, Personal and Social Learning**
  - Health and Physical Education
  - Interpersonal Development
  - Personal Learning
  - Civics and Citizenship
  
- **Discipline-based Learning**
  - The Arts
  - English
  - The Humanities
  - Languages Other Than English
  - Maths
  - Science
  
- **Interdisciplinary Learning**
  - Communication
  - Design Creativity and Technology
  - Information and Communications Technology
  - Thinking Processes

## *English*

### *Early Years Literacy*

Each morning between 9:00 and 11:00 the Prep students participate in Early Years Literacy. This involves a shared time at the beginning of the session during which the class shares a story, exploring concepts and ideas in texts. The children then have a one hour period focussing mainly on Reading. During this time the children will be working in small groups on a specific task related to the class focus. The teacher will usually work with one of the small groups in a guided reading session. Throughout the week, each group will have the opportunity to participate in a guided reading session.

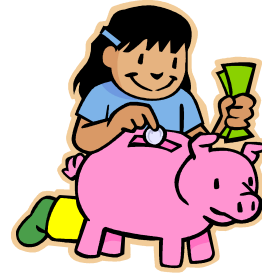
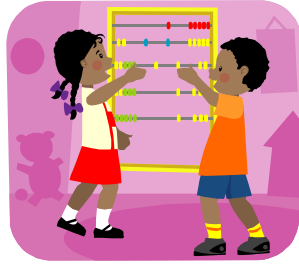
Each week the children focus on a specific sound on the THRASS Chart. THRASS stands for **T**eaching **H**andwriting **R**eading and **S**pelling **S**kills. It is designed to teach students about the letters, speech sounds and spelling choices in English. THRASS is a resource that helps children to understand the relationships between the 44 phonemes of spoken English and the 26 letters of the alphabet. For example, on the first week the children focused on the sound of **s** as in **sun**. All the letters and their sounds are covered throughout the year. We then begin to focus on sound blends, such as **sh** as in **shark**, **ch** as in **chair** and **ck** as in **duck**.

The next hour will be focussed on Writing. During this time the children will have a general discussion and shared writing experience on the specific genre (recount, letter writing, list making, labelling etc) the class will be focussing on. Again, the children will then be working in small groups on a specific task related to the class focus. The teacher will work with one of the small groups in a guided writing session. Throughout the week, each group will have the opportunity to participate in a guided writing session.

Another focus during the session is Speaking and Listening. In both reading and writing sessions, the children will be able to share their work with the grade. During this time children have an opportunity to discuss their learning with others in the group. This provides a chance to focus on skills such as voice projection and the behaviours of a good listener.

Each day the Preps will bring home a small book in their reader cover. This book is to share and to be enjoyed at home. The readers are sent home for children to practise **FLUENCY** and **PHRASING**. Your child may read through this book quite quickly and it may appear that they are finding the words 'easy'. These books are not designed to be a difficult task for your child. It is very beneficial to sit and look at the book together and have a **CONVERSATION** about what is happening in the book, how the characters may be feeling, and relating the ideas in the book to familiar experiences. **Each morning children will be encouraged to come into the classroom from 8:45am onwards to change their readers.**

We encourage parents to participate and help out in the classroom. During this time parents would work with a small group on a task such as a literacy/word game or listening activity.



## *Mathematics*

### *Early Years Numeracy*

Each week, the Prep students will have 4 to 5 one hour sessions of Mathematics. Here, the students will be participating in many hands-on and real life activities and games that focus on developing skills and strategies in:

- **Number:** number recognition and counting from 0 – 20 and beyond. Simple addition and subtraction equations. Ordinal numbers from first to tenth.
- **Space:** two-dimensional shapes and three dimensional objects. Location words such as beside, next to, etc.
- **Measurement, Chance and Data:** informal units, such as blocks, counters and hand prints to measure length, area, mass, and capacity. Compiling data related to their own activities to make simple pictographs.
- **Working Mathematically:** using materials and diagrams to investigate mathematical and real life situations.

In first term, the students will be compiling a “Maths Tool Kit”. The kit comprises of the basic and fundamental tools and materials needed for early childhood numeracy skills. Items the students have in their tool kit include counters, tens frame, number cards, 100 number chart, a ruler, basic shapes and addition and subtraction cards. This gives the children access to the core mathematical materials at all times. It assists the development of their independence and self confidence in mathematics. The tool kit will be of valuable assistance to the students throughout the year.





## ***Inquiry / Discovery Learning***

Our shared Inquiry for Term 1 focuses on the key question:

‘How can we learn and play well together?’

During the first term much of our Inquiry is made up of play based activities. These activities (learning centres) are designed to encourage interaction between children and foster the development of social skills and team work. During these sessions children are given a choice about the type of activity they would like to participate in. The learning centres are set out to encourage the students to use each of their five senses (sight, smell, taste, touch, and hearing) to explore different situations.

Types of learning centres that may be included in each session:

- Ⓢ A series of padlocks and a tub of keys
- Ⓢ A tub of water and objects that may float or sink
- Ⓢ Lego
- Ⓢ A tin of buttons to encourage pattern making
- Ⓢ A series of different sized nuts and bolts
- Ⓢ Dress ups (not costumes) for imaginary play
- Ⓢ Puzzles

As well as the development of social competencies these learning centres also enhance problem solving, number sense, fine motor skills and the ability to sort and classify.

At the beginning of each session all children come together to make decisions about which learning centre they would like to visit. The children need to consider questions such as:

What will I do?

How will I do it?

Children are encouraged to remain at the same learning centre for as long as they can during a session. While they are able to move from centre to centre, it is important to learn to maintain focus on an activity. During this time the teachers and parent helpers move around the room asking questions and having conversations with groups of children to extend or develop concepts and support learning.

At the conclusion of the session the Preps participate in a reflection session. During this time they consider:

What did I find tricky?

How did I solve the problem?

How did I interact with others?

## *Specialist Programs*

### ➤ Visual Arts

Each grade will enjoy a weekly Art session with Mrs. Mann in the Art Room where they will be encouraged to make 2 and 3 dimensional art works using a wide variety of materials.

### ➤ Performing Arts

Music Education develops in the student enjoyment, appreciation, creativity, skills and understandings.

Some of the goals that the music program seeks to develop are:

- To develop skills and techniques as a musician
- To sing, play, create, move, listen to a variety of music
- To experience and use musical instruments: piano, keyboard, percussion instruments, xylophones, recorders, drum stick rhythms.
- To introduce students to formal music notation
- To be disciplined to practise and polish pieces for performance
- To experience and manipulate the following music elements – beat, rhythm, pitch, melody, harmony, tone colour, style, texture and form.
- To listen, form opinions, discuss and analyse music
- To appreciate music from other cultures, times, and contexts.

### *Term 1 2008*

Preps will experience singing, dancing, listening, playing and creating music through many songs and activities. They will learn to use their voices by speaking, singing and whispering. They will join in games that help to develop each student's sense of beat, rhythm and pitch.

### ➤ Computer

Each week the Preps visit the library for a one hour session. The Preps use a variety of different computer programs to support learning in all curriculum areas. These include; Kidpix, Targeting Maths, Teacher's Cupboard and Clicker4.

There are also computers available in the classroom for use during Literacy, Maths and Discovery Learning. During these times there is an emphasis on working together in groups to find and sort information using the computer.

The preps also have regular access to the Interactive Whiteboard in the library and classroom. This provides an opportunity for children to manipulate objects on the computers screen by touch.

## ➤ Phys. Ed

The Physical Education Program for each class is composed of daily and weekly activities taken by the class teacher and the physical education teacher.

The weekly timetabling for year levels in the school are shown below, satisfying the requirements as identified by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

**Prep - 2** (PMP, swimming, gymnastics, dance, fundamental motor skills, fitness)

- 1/2 hour lesson with the Physical Education Teacher
- 1/2 hour Platoon (House) Physical Education sessions with classroom teachers
- 1/2 hour session of Perceptual Motor Program (PMP)
- An intensive swimming program in Term 4

## After School Sport

During Term, a Federal Government Funded After School Sport initiative gives students an opportunity to try new sports. [View the current timetable in the calendar.](#)

### Additional activities include:

- Community Joggers & Cycling Club (every weekday morning before school)
- Milo Cricket (Summer)
- Auskick Football (Winter)
- House Athletics Sports (Term 4)
- Active Transport to School Days
- Participation in Jump Rope every second year
- Fun Run every alternate year
- Physical Education Week activities during Term 4
- After School Basketball & Tee Ball teams
- Before School "Kelly Sports"



## ➤ Japanese

The Japanese program allows students to experience the Japanese language and culture. Each week, the Preps have a 45 minute session with Miyagi Sensei. During these sessions, the Preps learn Japanese words and greetings, as well as simple hiragana (Japanese alphabet).

## ***General Information***

- **Allergies**
  - Some children in Prep have allergies to different foods. We ask that where possible you avoid sending nuts to school.
- **Birthdays**
  - Some parents *choose* to bring in a special cake or lollies on their child's birthday. These will be given out at the end of the day. Children are asked to check with their parents before eating any food given out at school.
- **Brainfood**
  - Each morning the Preps eat brainfood at 10am. We ask that students bring along a small amount of fruit to eat at this time.
- **Hat**
  - Hats need to be worn at school until May and again in Term 4.
- **Homework**
  - As the Literacy program gets underway we will be sending home a small scrap book with an activity to do at home. These are designed to be fun tasks which complement the work we are doing at school.
- **Library**
  - Each week the Preps visit the library. This is an opportunity to borrow books to take home and share.
- **Lost Property**
  - Lost property is located in the breezeway at the hall end of the North building. Please feel free to take a look if something goes missing.
- **Parent Helpers**
  - Parents are very welcome to join in with any classroom activities. Parent involvement is a vital part of our Early Years Literacy program, where parents work with small groups of students.
- **Reporting to Parents**
  - Parents will have the opportunity for an informal interview during Term 1, allowing teachers to 'meet the parents' and find out relevant information about each child. Parents will receive a written report at the end of Term 2 and Term 4. Parent/Teacher interviews will be conducted early Term 3. All teachers are happy to arrange interviews at any time throughout the year, if you have anything you need to discuss.

Just a reminder that the door is always open for you and your family to come and see us at any stage. Please don't hesitate to visit, whether it is for a concern, a query, or a friendly chat! We look forward to having a fantastic year with you, your family and, of course, your Prep child!