

ENGLISH

POLICY

Definition: This English program will be based on AusVELs content and cover the strands: Language, Literacy and Literature.

Rationale: English is centred on the conscious and deliberate study of Language, Literature and Literacy. The study of English is central to the learning and development of all students. It helps create confident communicators, imaginative thinkers and informed citizens. It is through the study of English that individuals learn to analyse, understand, communicate with and build relationships with others and the world around them. It helps them become ethical, thoughtful, informed and active members of society. English conveys meaning through oral, visual and written media. It encompasses purposeful conversation, the ability to read both written and digital texts, and to effectively communicate through writing. Whilst English is a foundation for Inquiry, using the Inquiry process is also an essential context for learning English so students can develop world knowledge, understanding and deep thinking skills

Aims:

- To provide the opportunity for all children to develop their capacity and extend their ability in all language modes: listening, speaking, reading, viewing and writing.
- To encourage students to explore the meaning of texts, including multimodal, and to comprehend how meaning is conveyed.
- To provide a range of texts for listening to, reading and viewing, developing accuracy, fluency and an understanding of purpose.
- To create purposeful opportunities for students to speak, write, create and reflect on increasingly complex and sophisticated texts.
- To appreciate, enjoy and use the English language in all its variations.
- To develop an awareness of the English language's richness and power to evoke feelings, convey information, form ideas, facilitate interaction with others, entertain and persuade.
- To understand how Standard Australian English works in its spoken and written forms and, in combination with non-linguistic forms of communication, to create meaning.
- To develop interest and skills for inquiring into the aesthetic aspects of texts and develop an informed appreciation of literature.
- To use explicit teaching to enable students to become competent at critically reading, viewing, writing, speaking and listening.
- To empower students to apply their knowledge and skills in a variety of situations.
- To use an Inquiry approach when teaching English and to develop literacy strategies when teaching Inquiry skills.

Implementation:

- The first two hours of the day in the Years Prep - 2 will be dedicated to the teaching of English as a priority. Years 3-6 will provide two hours of literacy teaching and learning throughout the day in blocks where possible.
- The 'Victorian Early Years of Schooling' model will be used as a basis for all teaching approaches Prep – 6.
- The 'Letterland' program will be used in Years Prep and Year 1 as a primary source of phonic development. The THRASS program will be introduced as appropriate in these years and continued through to Year 6.
- It is important that teachers cater for students at their point of need so the class program will provide teaching and learning experiences at the appropriate VELs/AusVELs level, below the VELs/AusVELs level and above the VELs/AusVELs level.

- Specific English skills to be explicitly taught on a daily basis P-6 within the context of Inquiry learning. The structure of whole-part-whole is to be adopted for reading, viewing, writing, speaking and listening. The E5 quality teaching practices will be implemented to develop students' metacognitive capacity.
- Teachers will have a written learning intention for each session, which will be clearly articulated to the students, to support their understanding of the purpose of their learning. Students will articulate their new learning during share time. For instance they will address such questions as, *How will what I have learnt today, improve my reading/writing etc?*
- The AusVELS Resources on the website, <http://ausvels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/English/Overview/Rationale-and-Aims> will be used to inform teaching approaches, support planning and develop professional knowledge.
- Programs will be sequential, developmental and differentiated to the needs of individual children.
- Teachers will take into consideration the different learning styles, and interests of all students, in order to cater for their learning needs.
- Planning of English programs will be the responsibility of the classroom teacher, along with the year level coordinator.
- Intervention programs will be offered to supplement the classroom program for students falling below the expected level. The principal will use data collected from teachers, to make decisions on the students to be included and the programs to be conducted. A range of opportunities are provided for intervention – Reading Recovery, tutors, Levelled Literacy Intervention.
- Parent participation in classrooms will be encouraged. All parent helpers should attend the 'Parents Learning About School' course offered in Term One each year.
- Staff will be encouraged to attend external professional learning activities and present newly acquired resources/ideas to staff. Teachers are also encouraged to visit peer classrooms, other schools, attend Early Years Network PD and to participate in small school local activities eg moderation sessions.
- Education Support staff will have the opportunity for professional learning in literacy.
- The growth in multimodal literacy means that students need to develop comprehension and research skills, such as discriminating and questioning, to effectively use these multimodal sources. The English program needs to be flexible, adaptive and creative in order to embrace new technologies.
- English assessment will be completed according to the school's 'Assessment Schedule.'

Reading and Viewing

- Read Aloud, Shared or Modelled Reading, with an explicit teaching focus, will occur each day as a whole class.
- Students will be engaged in sustained, purposeful Independent Reading every day to build a love of reading; plus fluency, stamina and comprehension. The teachers will conduct one-on-one reading conferences with students during this time.
- The interactive whiteboards, computers, laptop program and iPad program will complement the reading program by allowing students more access to such components as ebooks, research opportunities and appropriate software.
- Small group sessions/workshops will be taken at least four days a week, after an initial few weeks to set up expectations in Term One. These will usually be Guided Reading; Reciprocal Teaching for Grade 3 and above and Guided Reading for Year Prep – 2. Buddy Reading may be used to support children who do not read at home.
- Each grade will have access to the school Library so they may borrow books for independent class and home reading
- Author studies will complement the mainly non-fiction nature of English that is aligned with Inquiry. These studies will provide opportunities for the development of higher order, in-depth comprehension skills. This will significantly contribute to the teaching of the Literature strand in VELS/AusVELS. Author study tubs will be developed.
- Comprehension will be an integral part of all reading sessions as the gaining of meaning, through informed conversation, provides a purpose for reading. The teachers will aim to develop in students a higher level of understanding and the ability to think deeply/critically about their reading. The opportunity to retell or summarise (quite different skills) with a partner or small group is valuable in developing comprehension.

- Students will have texts to take home each day. The class teacher will regularly check the students' Home Reading Logs and write a comment.
- The focus of teaching comprehension skills will be on building higher order critical thinking skills. There must be a balance of focus on both fiction and non-fiction comprehension strategies.

Writing

- Students will be encouraged to accept ownership and responsibility for their writing. During Independent writing, they will collect ideas, plan, write and rehearse writing in their **Writer's Notebook**. They will also collect the writers' *tools of the trade*: fantastic words and phrases; types of lead sentences; other craft ideas. The Writer's Notebook will demonstrate their thinking about writing and is an integral part of the writing program.
- The process of writing: planning, drafting, revising, editing and publishing will be modelled and explicitly taught so the students from Years Prep-6 can publish and celebrate at least two pieces of writing per term.
- Students will be encouraged to write a variety of genres. The explicit teaching of these genres will be taught within the context of the class Inquiry. Refer to the 'Integrated Curriculum Four Year Planner' for unit content to support text types.
- The author studies, as mentioned in the Reading section, will also be an important aspect of the writing program. The author's writing can provide inspiration and examples to assist in the development of student writing. They can be used as mentor texts for revising and editing.
- Through a process of pre and post writing assessments, teachers will be able to make informed judgments about class, small group and individual strategies and skills to teach. Lesson foci will include: writing ideas, sentence fluency, organisation, word choice, voice, conventions and presentation.
- One hour writing sessions are to be taken daily. Each structured session will have a learning intention, an independent writing time, opportunity for individual conferences and a share time. Teaching strategies will include shared and modelled writing, independent writing plus small group interactive or guided writing according to student need.
- Each class will have a writing resource area that is accessible for students and may include paper and materials for writing; revising and editing, support materials such as dictionaries and thesauruses; publishing and bookmaking supplies.
- Classrooms will have an active, continually evolving Word Wall to extend students' vocabulary.
- Handwriting sessions will concentrate on the explicit teaching of letter formation - especially starting points, pen/pencil grip, size, speed and style of writing.
- There will be a balanced approach to the text types (genres) to be taught within the context of the Inquiry focus, AusVELS and student-generated writing.

Spelling

- The development of phonological awareness is a pre-cursor to learning to spell. This includes oral activities to build sound-letter relationships; replicating and inventing rhymes, alliteration, syllables and sound patterns; manipulating onset and rime with magnetic letters.
- The Spelling program should be a balance between some *learning of words* and some *learning about words*.
- Spelling should be a daily feature of the writing process. Students should be aware that the purpose of being able to spell accurately is directly related to their role as writers. Publishing writing means that the audience is able to read what is written.
- Spelling from Prep to Level Two, includes learning high frequency words; using onset and rime to spell words; matching common vowel and consonant digraphs or consonant blends; learning about diagraphs, long vowels, blends, silent letters; morphemes and syllabification. Letterland and THRASS will be used to develop phonemic awareness.
- As students become more competent writers, they understand how to use sound/letter relationships and knowledge of spelling 'rules', compound words, prefixes, suffixes, morphemes and less common letter combinations to attempt new words.
- Towards the upper end of primary school, students are able to use apostrophes of contraction effectively; know how to use context to identify correct spelling of homophones; can transfer knowledge of word origins and base words to make links with new words, such as technical words.

- The word selection for spelling lists should be related to the individual development of each student, and the expected words to be known according to age. The sources of these words include high frequency, topic and ‘word families.’
- Spelling should be no more than 10 words per week. The number of words should be adjusted according to the individual student’s ability to learn new words (for some students it may be consolidation of two words they sometimes spell correctly with a couple of new words).
- Students should be taught to use appropriate resources, dictionaries and thesauruses, to enable them to locate correct spelling
- **Look/Say/Cover/Write/Check** books to go home daily in the red book bags.

Oral Language (Speaking and Listening)

- Oral language underpins all learning. Students will be encouraged to explore, problem solve, analyse and discuss their observations and conclusions.
- Rich oral language in discussions has a vital role in providing scaffolded learning experiences for students. Teachers will need to explicitly teach, model and facilitate students in the skills needed for a more in-depth, academic conversation.
- Vocabulary enrichment will be a crucial component of all subject areas. The teaching and use of higher quality words, such as *galloped* rather than *went*, *queue* rather than *line* etc is a priority across the school. Students will be supported and encouraged to improve the quality of their conversations through modelling and opportunities to participate in deep and meaningful conversations.
- Teaching needs to be explicit and clarify new words in context to ensure that the students understand what skills they are being taught when doing the task and what links they can make to prior knowledge.
- Effective oral language includes: auditory and listening skills, correct pronunciation, adequate description, the ability to categorise, accurate grammar, developing sentence structure, ability to formulate questions and understanding of the social skills of communication (pragmatics).
- Speakers and listeners create meaning through their conversations. Therefore teachers need to teach students to be effective listeners and to develop protocols for quality conversations.

ASSESSMENT:

AusVELS contains a clear set of standards for use in assessing students at all levels. Assessment enables us to provide ongoing information about each child’s development in English. Teachers will use a variety of assessment tools, including self and peer assessment, to assess each child’s progress. Assessment will be in accordance with the school’s Assessment and Reporting policy, pre and post testing in accordance with the requirements of the students. Assessment will be of, as and for learning.

- All classroom teachers will have regular individual reading and writing conferences with each student. Teachers will write notes on each conference and negotiate personal goals with each student from the conference.
- Students in Years 3 and 5 will participate in the NAPLAN national testing.
- Students will create digital portfolios that showcase their learning.
- Students in Prep will participate in the English Online Interview in February and December
- The Assessment Schedule will be followed.
- Teachers will moderate writing samples with peers and other small school teachers.

Evaluation: This program will be reviewed every three years in line with the School Council schedule or when DEECD guidelines change.

DRAFTED 18/9/2014 by Sharon Walker

This policy was last ratified by School Council in...