



ENGLISH POLICY

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 Kinglake Primary School 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 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.

CONTENT:

A balanced English program will cover the strands:

- Language
- Literacy
- Literature

The content of each of strand is grouped into the following sub-strands:

| Language | Literature | Literacy |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Language variation and change | Literature in context | Texts in context |
| Language for interaction | Responding to literature | Interacting with others |
| Text structure and organisation | Examining literature | Interpreting, analysing and evaluating |
| Expressing and developing ideas | Creating literature | Creating texts |
| Sound and letter knowledge | | |

IMPLEMENTATION:

General

- 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> and the WMR Online Professional Learning Resources (both published materials and on the Utranet) will be used to inform teaching approaches, support planning and develop professional knowledge. A selection of quality professional reading texts can also be borrowed from the school library.
- Programs will be sequential, developmental and differentiated to the needs of individual children.
- Teachers will take into consideration the different learning styles of all students, in order to cater for their learning needs.
- Planning of English activities will be the responsibility of the classroom teacher, along with the year level team, English Curriculum Group and Literacy Coach/Coaches.

- Intervention programs will be offered to supplement the classroom program for some students. The Literacy Intervention Group will use data collected from teachers, to make decisions on the students to be included and the programs to be conducted. The group will investigate a range of opportunities to provide intervention, e.g. Reading Recovery teachers, experienced teachers, pre-service teachers and parents.
- English as Additional Language/Dialect (EAL/D) students, will be provided with additional language assistance as deemed necessary. An EAL/D teacher/ Multicultural Education Staff member will be appointed when there are sufficient needs and funding. Each teacher has a responsibility to provide appropriate learning opportunities for all students (including EAL/D children). The ESL Assessment Continuum (or an alternative EAL/D assessment tool when developed) may be appropriate for some of the students.
- Parent participation in classrooms will be encouraged. All parents will be required to have a *Working with Children* check before assisting in the school.
- Staff will be encouraged to attend external professional learning activities and present newly acquired resources/ideas to staff; school-based professional learning will also be provided through Professional Learning Teams (PLTs), Professional Learning (PL- originally known as PD) sessions and various coaching scenarios.
- 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.
- The Literacy Coach and English Curriculum Group, with input from classroom teachers, will be responsible for sharing and continually updating resources required for effective teaching.
- The transition of students into, within and beyond primary school, will be considered when planning programs and assessment.

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 (usually reading *Just Right* texts or differentiated, purposeful learning experiences) 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. Students will each have a reading journal or Wiki/ Blog to record their personal reading goals and reflections.
- 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 1. These will usually be Guided Reading; Reciprocal Teaching for Grade 3 and above; or Bookclubs from Grade 5. Some students may be engaged in activities, such as Buddy Reading that support the learning of reading skills, whilst others are doing Independent Reading. Teachers will communicate the learning intention for the small group session.
- Each grade will have a Classroom Library to which students have contributed ideas and take responsibility. From this library, students will select their weekly texts for Independent 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 high order, in-depth comprehension and top-level structure investigations of a specific collection on texts from Prep to Grade 6. This will significantly contribute to the teaching of the Literature strand in VELS/AusVELS. The author study tubs are expected to be used for three terms per year.
- Comprehension will be an integral part of all reading sessions as the gaining of meaning, through informed conversation, from a text, 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 (diary) and write a comment.
- The focus of teaching comprehension skills will be on building strategies to use on continuous texts i.e. books. The structure of the STARS program, in-line with the Di Snowball comprehension strategies and VELS/AusVELS, will guide the teaching of comprehension.

Writing

- Students will be encouraged to accept ownership and responsibility for their writing. During Independent writing, they will collect ideas, plan, write Small Moments 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 Grades 1-6 can publish and celebrate at least two pieces of writing per term. A class monitoring chart will allow students to work independently in different steps of the writing process.
- 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 Inquiry Curriculum Map for the alignment of text types in each year level.
- 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 (Quick Write), teachers will be able to make informed judgements about class, small group and individual strategies and skills to teach. The focus/foci of these Craft of Writing traits to be taught will include 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 will 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. Class-made Anchor Charts and wordlists related to Inquiry and vocabulary building are integral to the development of quality independent writing. Classroom labels and captions supporting classroom organisation will also support word familiarity.
- 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. (see table below)

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 Foundation 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.
- 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 need of each student. The sources of these words are:
 1. High frequency words that students are using in reading and writing. Teachers assist students to recognise High Frequency words. 'Have you frequently seen this word in your reading/ Are you trying to spell this word when you are writing?'
 2. Tier 2 Topic Words from Inquiry work or class charts. Words that students can recognise in reading, can understand the meaning of and feel they will use in their writing.
 3. Students' tier 2 word bank of Interesting Words found during Independent Reading.

- Spelling should be no more than 8 personal 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).
- Regular spelling investigations that involve student conversations and writing about observations should be a feature of the Spelling Program. The word wall should support the learning of new words. It should be placed in a highly visible section of the room at eye level- preferably with removable words
- Students should be taught to use appropriate resources, dictionaries and thesauruses, to enable them to locate correct spelling
- **Spelling Strategies:** Visual Spelling; Phonological Spelling; Morphemic Spelling; Etymological Spelling. (refer to Spelling Scope and Sequence for more information)
- **Teaching and Learning Approaches for Spelling**
 1. A daily spelling session up to 15 minutes, which includes about five minutes of explicit teaching matched to focus words. Individual whiteboards and markers can be used to practise what is taught.
 2. Five minutes for students to practise their words. For example, Look/Say/Name/Cover/ Write/Check, spelling to a partner, breaking spelling into meaningful chunks using coloured pencils.
- **Look/Say/Name/Cover/Write/Check** -(refer to Spelling Scope and Sequence for more information)

Oral Language (Speaking and Listening)

- Oral language will underpin all elements of learning at Wedge Park Primary School. 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 Tier two words (higher quality words, such as *galloped* rather than *went*, *queue* rather than *line*) 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.

(refer to Spelling Scope and Sequence for more information)

ASSESSMENT:

The VELS/ 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 to 2 will participate in the English Online Interview in February.
- School-based Literacy Assessment Schedule will be followed.
- Teachers in Grade 1-6 will use the Quick Write process for pre- and post-assessment of writing.

EVALUATION OF PROGRAM:

The English Policy will be reviewed and revised as needed. This will ensure that the above aims are being met. Data to be used include: CASES input, Literacy Walks, school benchmarks, Literacy Intervention team and teacher observations. The Teaching Methodology Book will provide guidelines for auditing the effectiveness of the teaching of English.