

Parent Information 2012

This year our Level 2 Program has 5 full time teachers all working together but the students are allocated into one of four home grades. This enables us to have five groups among the whole cohort for Literacy, Numeracy and Inquiry sessions. This ensures that there are smaller teaching groups and a smaller teacher ratio.

Curriculum

The curriculum at Syndal South is based on the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS). At level Two (Grades One and Two) the focus is on further developing Literacy and Numeracy skills and the development of physical, personal and social capacities.

English Early Years Literacy

For two hours each day, the Level Two students participate in Early Years Literacy.

The reading hour 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 continue the hour period by focusing 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.

The writing hour focuses on developing various writing skills. During this time the children will participate in a shared learning experience focusing on a specific genre (recount, letter writing, list making, labelling etc). Again, the children will then be working in small groups on a particular task related to the class focus (including handwriting and spelling). 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 Literacy session is Speaking and Listening. The children will be able to share their work with the grade and 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.

A take home reader will come home from school each afternoon. Please take the time to enjoy reading with your child each day. The purpose of the take home readers is for children to practise FLUENCY and PHRASING in their reading. 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 share 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 work with a small group on a task such as a literacy/word game or listening activity.

Reading Recovery

Reading Recovery is available for those students in year one, who require assistance in developing effective reading and writing processes. All children are assessed at the beginning of Year one and are monitored throughout the year. Those children with the greatest need are selected to have 30 minute individual, daily lessons specifically designed to strengthen their literacy skills.

Some ideas to help children with spelling

Your child should try to spell words for himself/herself by 'having a go' and then checking with adults, dictionaries, thesaurus, word lists or any other accurate source. Encourage your child to use the LOOK, SAY, COVER, WRITE, CHECK method to learn new words.

Encourage your child to look at the shape of the word, for patterns in words and for words within words.

Mathematics ***Early Years Numeracy***

Each week, the Level Two students will have 4 to 5 one hour sessions of Mathematics. Here, the students will be participating in many hands-on tasks, designed to develop competency in:

- Number:
 - Place value of numbers up to 1000
 - Skip counting by 2s, 4s and 5s
 - Odd and even numbers
 - Dollars and cents
 - Simple fractions
 - Addition, subtraction, multiplication and division

- Space:
 - Lines, surfaces, planes, corners and boundaries
 - Two and three dimensional shapes and objects
 - Symmetry and Asymmetry
 - Location and maps

- Measurement, Chance and Data:
 - Measuring length, area, volume, mass and time
 - Informal and formal measurement
 - Sequencing time such as months of the year
 - Chance

- Simple graphs
- Working Mathematically:
 - Making and testing simple conjectures
 - Working with calculators

Mathematics takes place in a supportive learning environment, where we will provide concrete materials to enhance learning.

Some ideas to help your child with Mathematics

There are countless ways to help your child grasp mathematical concepts and skills. Number understanding is not the only mathematical skill necessary at school. Space and Measurement, Chance and Data are all part of the Mathematical Curriculum and opportunities for experiences in these abound.

- Games – many children’s games are mathematically based. Jigsaw puzzles provide early experience for visual planning skills to develop. Games where dice are used give opportunities for number use and understanding. Logic and strategy games sharpen young minds for thinking and planning ahead. Apart from the social language opportunities inherent in these games, the mathematical thinking involved is a huge value and cannot be taught in a formal sense.
- In the kitchen – cooking and preparing food involves numbers and measures. Ask your child to contribute at an early age, from counting how many people and how many potatoes, to measuring ingredients. Temperature, weight, mass, time and length are all part of life in the kitchen.



Inquiry Learning

Throughout 2012 the Level Two students will be exploring the following Inquiry Units.

The Changing Sky.

This year we have a whole year inquiry based on The Changing Sky. We will be looking at the different types of sky and the reasons why the sky changes. We will also be looking at the different seasons and the different phases of the moon. We will be collecting photos of the sky to compare. We will be visiting The Planetarium to explore the sky at night.

What Makes It Move?

Throughout this unit the students will be looking at how machines move. They will be looking at both simple machines and compound machines. They will be exploring how machines work, how they move and which objects have the same moving parts. We will be visiting Scienceworks to participate in Little Builders Programme.

What Makes Our Place Special?

This unit develops students' understandings of community. We will be looking at our local communities and then wider communities. We will look into what makes up a community and compare it to the past. We will determine what aspects have stayed the same and which are important to a community. We will also be looking at the differences in technology and how it has shaped out daily life.

How And Why Do People Tell Stories?

During this unit the students will read a variety of texts and explore the wide range of purposes, contexts and audiences for which texts are produced. They will learn to recognise that texts are constructed by authors, and distinguish between texts that represent real and imaginary experience.

Passion Projects.

Children will research a project of their own following the Inquiry process.

Specialist Programs

➤ Visual Arts

Students at Level 2 have a one hour lesson in the Art Room with Mrs Merrilyn Mann each week. During the year they have the opportunity to use a range of art materials and equipment to communicate their ideas, observations and feelings. Students will work both independently and collaboratively to experiment with two and three dimensional materials. Painting, drawing, photography, print making, modelling, construction and textiles will be explored by the students at this level. Wherever possible the Visual Art Program works to link art lessons with the classroom curriculum.

Due to the range of materials used during art lessons, it is most important that the students wear protective clothing to all art lessons. A long sleeved shirt or smock will help to reduce the chance of getting paint on school clothes.

➤ 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 and listen to a variety of music.
- To experience and use musical instruments: including percussion instruments, xylophones, glockenspiels, recorders and drum stick rhythms.
- To introduce students to formal music notation.
- To be disciplined to practise and polish pieces for performance.
- To listen, form opinions, discuss and analyse music.
- To appreciate music from other cultures, times, and contexts.

➤ Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Each week the Grade One / Twos visit the resource centre for a one hour session. We use a variety of different computer programs to support learning in all curriculum areas. We are also working to develop competencies in using ICT such as opening, closing and saving documents.

There are also computers available in the classroom for use during Literacy, Maths and Inquiry. During these times there is an emphasis on the responsible use of ICT.

All children 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.



➤ Physical Education

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

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)

- 30 minute lesson with Mr Kenez
- 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 1)
- 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



➤ Japanese

The Japanese program allows students to experience the Japanese language and culture. Each week, the students have one hour sessions with Sensei. During these sessions, the Level Two students will continue to learn Japanese words and greetings, as well as simple hiragana (Japanese alphabet).

General Information

- Allergies
 - Some children have allergies to different foods. We ask that where possible you avoid sending nuts and foods containing nuts (such as Nutella) 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 brainfood is eaten 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.
 - Sunscreen is available in the classroom (parent permission required – blue standard permission form).
- Homework
 - Each night children are asked to share their take home reader with a parent or guardian. Additional activities will be sent home as required.
- Library
 - Each week all grades visit the library. This is an opportunity to borrow books to take home and share. Please make sure library bags come to school each week.
- 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 and PMP 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 start of Term 3 and end of 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 child!