

Grade 5/6 Parent Information 2015



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Welcome to Year 5/6 at The Patch Primary School!

We look forward to working with your children this year and the successes and developments the year brings.

Communication between home and school is essential for a successful year. We encourage you to keep us informed about celebration, issues, problems or questions that may arise during the year.

Email is an easy and effective way of keeping in touch. We can also arrange a suitable time to meet to discuss any issues with you.

Thanking you for your support.

We look forward to working in partnership with you.

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SECTION ONE

Routines and Administration

Bell Times

8.50am	Long bell - all students expected to be in classrooms.
9.00am	Short bell - start of learning time.
11.00am	Recess play
11.25	Long bell – start heading to classrooms
11.30	Short bell - line up outside classroom
1.30	Lunch order bell (Mon, Wed, Fri)
1.35	Lunch eating time
1.45	Lunch play
2.25	Long bell – start heading to classrooms
2.30	Short bell - line up outside classroom
3.30	School day ends

All Prep students are dismissed at 3.15pm. Older siblings of Prep students may leave at 3.15 with their younger brothers or sisters.

Term Dates

Term 1: Wednesday, 28th January (Children commence on Friday 30th January), to Friday 27th March

Term 2: Monday, 13th April to Friday, 26th June

Term 3: Monday, 13th July to Friday, 18th September

Term 4: Monday, 5th October to Friday, 18th December

Punctuality

All students are expected to be in the classroom ready to start the day at 8.50am. If for some reason they are late arriving at school, parents will need to sign students in using the iPad located next to the office. Please collect a red card from the office staff for your child to hand to the teacher in the classroom. Punctuality is of the utmost importance as teaching sessions will begin at this time and students who are late arriving not only miss out on critical teaching and learning, but also interrupt the learning of others.

Timetable 5/6A, 5/6B & 5/6C 2015

8.50 – 9.00	9.00 – 10.00	10.00 – 11.00	11.00	11.30 – 12.30	12.30 – 1.30	1.30 – 1.45	1.45 – 2.30	2.30 – 3.20	
Mon	Literacy (Term 1/2 Standing Tall / Taming the Butterflies / Queen Bees / King Pins - rotations with inquiry learning.	Literacy (Term 1/2 Standing Tall / Taming the Butterflies / Queen Bees / King Pins - rotations with inquiry learning	R E C E S S	Maths (Term 1/2 Standing Tall / Taming the Butterflies / Queen Bees / King Pins - rotations with inquiry learning	Maths (Term 1/2 Standing Tall / Taming the Butterflies / Queen Bees / King Pins - rotations with inquiry learning	L U N C H E A T I N G		Maths	
Tue	ROTATIONS Music Art P.E. Philosophy Sustainability ICT	ROTATIONS Music Art P.E. Philosophy Sustainability ICT		ROTATIONS Music Art P.E. Philosophy Sustainability ICT	ROTATIONS Music Art P.E. Philosophy Sustainability ICT				ROTATIONS Music Art P.E. Philosophy Sustainability ICT
Wed	Science - 56C Japanese-56A Enviro- 56B	Japanese- 56C Enviro -56A Science -56B		Enviro - 56C Science -56A Japanese - 56B	Maths				Inquiry Literacy
Thur	Literacy	Literacy		Maths	Literacy (Spelling)				Inquiry Literacy
Frid	Assembly / Literacy	Literacy		Maths	Sport				Sport/Reflection/ Goal Setting/ Community Circle

Class Communication

We will produce a level newsletter every two weeks. Please check it for important upcoming events, curriculum information and any special requests needed to support your child's learning.

At times there will be curriculum tips on how to assist your child's learning.

We will supply our email addresses to you for your convenience, but please remember that we don't always get to our check and access our email, so if there is anything urgent please call school.

Class Newsletters will also be available on Tiqbiz and the school website: <http://www.thepatchps.vic.edu.au>

SECTION TWO

Behaviour Management

A culture of positive reinforcement, support and encouragement underpins all our interactions with children.

A whole school approach to behaviour management is used to ensure that there continues to be few issues with behaviour at The Patch. This management strategy is called 'Step Up For Success' and it is consistently used in all grades across the school.

STEP UP FOR SUCCESS

STEP UP FOR SUCCESS is a 3 step approach that is simple for students to understand and for teachers to implement. STEP UP FOR SUCCESS is focuses on positive outcomes and is clear visually for students and teachers. STEP UP FOR SUCCESS acts as a catalyst for teachers to focus on those children who always do the right thing but can sometimes be overlooked due to others demanding or needing more attention.

HOW IT WORKS:

- Each classroom will use a chart divided into 7 sections titled 'Step Up For Success'.
- Each student will begin the day with their name in the middle section of the chart, the aim being to move up 3 steps to the top of the chart by the end of the school day.
- Once a student reaches the top of the chart there will be a reward according to the system in place in each particular grade.
- If a student does something positive (e.g. working well, giving a good answer, listening well, helping someone) the teacher can tell them to 'step up' and their name is then moved up to the next step on the chart.
- If a student does something inappropriate (e.g. arriving late for class after lunch, disrupting the class, being rude) the teacher can tell them that they have to 'step down' and their name is then moved down a step.
- The first step down is a warning to the child.
- At the second step down the child needs to be removed from his/her peers for 15 minutes as a more serious warning. This could be in the middle room, at the side of the classroom on a chair, in a corner of the room etc.
- If a student has 'stepped down' into the second last section after a second warning, the teacher can unobtrusively focus on helping this child move up again by 'catching them doing something positive'.
- Clear guidelines and consequences need to be in place and communicated clearly at the very start of introducing this 3 step approach because everyone needs to be clear about what the final consequence is if a student reaches the bottom of the chart – as well as the reward available to them if they 'step up' 3 steps to the top of the chart.
- The consequences of reaching the bottom of the chart after 3 steps down are to take work and go to a designated teacher for the rest of the day. Parents will be informed via a note home or a phone call if their child has had to be sent to another grade due to inappropriate behaviour.
- If a child has 'stepped down', been sent to a designated teacher for the rest of the day and then still misbehaves, he/she will be sent to the Assistant Principal or Principal for further action.
- If a child is being removed from his/her class too often, the teacher and Principal or Assistant Principal will meet to discuss what further intervention is needed to break this pattern and move forward more positively. Parents would be informed and be involved in the process.
- Specialist teachers will send a note back to class listing the names of any students who have shown positive behaviour/responses or otherwise.
- **Each day is a new day** as children all begin again in the middle section of the chart.

SECTION THREE

Curriculum

Environmental Education

Environmental Education is given a strong focus at The Patch School. The school has two large “outdoor classrooms” (our beautiful wetlands and our sustainable living gardens) and an Eco-Centre where formal and informal experiential learning take place.

The environmental program aims to provide students with an understanding of the principles of ecology and education for sustainable development.

Activities such as preparing and planting a food garden, collecting seed from indigenous plants, building a worm farm or compost bin, constructing a trellis for climbing plants, revegetating the natural bush corridor, incubating eggs and raising chickens, identifying and harvesting bush foods from the Koori garden and creating an interpretive tree trail around the school provide processes and skills that involve observation, communication, classification, interpretation, questioning, measuring, reporting, predicting, designing, experimenting, testing, problem solving and hypothesizing.

Throughout the program it is hoped that the students acquire a knowledge and understanding of the living world and their place in it that enables them to live sustainably and responsibly.

Environmental classes are taken every week for one hour.

Extra Support

From time to time, students may need extra support for their learning. In addition to support provided in each classroom, three support programmes run at The Patch.

QuickSmart Numeracy

QuickSmart Numeracy is designed to improve students’ recall of number facts and basic computation skills. It is a structured program when selected students work in pairs for three 30 minute sessions a week with a facilitator.

Over the years, we have seen students who are involved in the Quicksmart numeracy program showing a marked improvement in skills. Academic research of the program has shown an average 2 or 3 year improvement in one year. Feel free to have a look at the Quicksmart website at <http://www.une.edu.au/simerr/quicksmart/pages/index.php>

QuickSmart Literacy (QS)

QuickSmart Literacy (QS) is designed to improve the word recognition skills, word meaning knowledge, reading fluency and text comprehension of students. Its structure and focus complements our whole school literacy approach, so the children are easily able to connect their QS practice back to their classroom learning. The selected students work in pairs for three 30 minute sessions a week with a facilitator taking part in targeted practice activities such as guided and independent practice, voice recording, flashcards and word study. Again we have seen marked improvement in reading skills.

Corrective Reading

Corrective Reading is held 3 times a week. It gives intensive instructional support for students with reading difficulties who do not read accurately, lack confidence or do not understand what they are reading. The program includes constant monitoring of progress so that students only move to the next level when they are ready. The program uses a research-based direct instruction teaching mode, gives lots of opportunities for students to practise new skills and we have found it boosts student confidence and success.

ICT

This year Grade 5/6 students will have numerous opportunities to use a range of information and communication technologies across the curriculum. They will use a range of software programs that promote creativity, problem solving and thinking skills and develop their skills in the area of ICT. In addition to the computers in classrooms, Grade 5/6 students will have access to 30 notebooks on a weekly basis which are used to integrate Information and Communication Technologies into everyday teaching and learning. They have access to a number of resources including networked computers, iPads, notebooks, digital cameras and interactive whiteboards.

As part of our ICT program, students will also be taught about appropriate uses for computers and safety on the internet. We will be focusing on:

- Respectful communication/netiquette
- Protecting personal information
- Behaving ethically online
- Cyberbullying
- Identifying appropriate online content/places
- Cybercitizenship—interaction with online communities

As a parent, you play an important role in helping your children have safe and positive experiences online. Become aware of how children and young people use the internet, some of the risks they face and strategies to manage these risks. Guide your child to enjoy the best of the online world. We recommend visiting <http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/Parents.aspx> for information, tips and advice to help you and your family make the most of being online and staying safe.

Indigenous Education

The Patch Primary School's Indigenous Education is underpinned by the School Vision statement and is based on the agreed values of Respect, Integrity and Responsibility. We acknowledge the land as part of the Kulin Nation and specifically as a Wurundjeri Place.

As a school we show respect towards the original custodians of our land at assemblies, with "Welcome to Country" and raising the three flags at assembly – the Australian flag, the Torres Strait Islander flag and the Aboriginal flag. We celebrate focus days of importance for Aboriginal communities such as Close the Gap and incorporate Wurundjeri Studies in the curriculum. We are currently in the process of incorporating this with our Japanese program. Our outdoor environmental program, 'Learning Landscapes', fosters a multidisciplinary approach to Indigenous studies by providing a Bunjil Tree Trail and Bush Tucker trail.

The school curriculum in Australia has made Indigenous Studies a priority because it provides opportunities for all learners to deepen their knowledge of Australia by engaging with the world's oldest continuous living cultures. This knowledge and understanding enriches students' ability to participate positively in the ongoing development of Australia as they see similarities and differences between people and become more aware of diversity in the wider community as well as the concept of change over time.

Japanese

At The Patch Primary School, the Languages Program focuses on Japan and the Japanese language.

While it can take up to 2000 hours of language study to become fluent in the Japanese language, primary school students have the ability to learn and retain new language readily, particularly in regard to written Japanese characters. Recognition of hiragana characters, and the way they form words and sentences, will be introduced and reinforced through a variety of learning activities and games. Japanese vocabulary and grammar will be emphasized, as well as learning about Japanese culture and etiquette associated with speaking in Japanese. Students will also have the opportunity to get involved in activities related to Japanese festivals as well as some historical aspects of Japan.

Numerous studies have indicated that learning a second language has many advantages other than being able to speak another language. Studying a second language in the earliest years of primary school is shown to advance the age of readiness in English. Language skills are transferable; what we learn in one language helps us with any other language. Learning Japanese helps the students to strengthen their English skills. Learning a second language enhances the student's ability in writing and maths as well as advancing cognitive development. Research has also shown that people who learn a second language at a young age are more likely to have more advanced grey matter in their brains.

The Japanese program at The Patch runs from Prep through to Grade 6. All students learn Japanese for one hour per week. The Japanese program supports the school's English literacy and numeracy programs. It is difficult to teach another language without re-enforcing English structures. Numeracy is also supported through activities such as telling the time, counting money and calculating change.

Students will experience Japanese culture, participating in activities including sport, activities around famous Japanese folktales, craft, and music. We are also applying for a Japanese sister school, so that students will be able to engage in meaningful language learning with students in Japan.

We hope that students at The Patch will find learning Japanese a fun and rewarding experience, and that students will choose to continue Japanese at high school, where available. If you have any queries, concerns or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact our Japanese teacher, Jane Capon, who is here on Monday – Thursday.

Library

The Library program provides instruction for students on how to use a library effectively, how to access resources and how to borrow selectively and responsibly. It also offers opportunities to promote literature through book discussions, reviews, clubs, open times and shared reading.

Students will be visiting the library on a Wednesday to return, browse and borrow new books.

Students are allowed to borrow 3 or 4 books for 2 weeks. Please ensure books are looked after and borrowed and returned via a library bag e.g. plastic bag/ blue reader folder.

If books are lost please let your home group teacher know and the lost book needs to be replaced with a new book of similar quality, topic and value.

Literacy

Our literacy program is designed to develop strategic readers and writers through the explicit teaching of reading and writing strategies. We believe that constructing meaning is the goal of literacy instruction. We want students to monitor and enhance their understanding, acquire and actively use knowledge and develop insight. We want our students to learn strategies for: finding ideas for writing, writing with clear intentions and purposes, developing a working knowledge of the qualities of good writing, developing an understanding of the purpose of revision and learning to edit using appropriate writing conventions.

What is meant by explicit teaching of reading and writing strategies?

Explicit instruction can be broken down into six specific steps:

- Teacher explains *what* the strategy is e.g. making connections in reading or using voice in writing.
- Teacher explains *why* the strategy is important.
- Teacher explains *when* to use the strategy.
- Teacher models *how* to perform the strategy in an actual context while students observe.
- Teacher *guides students* as they practice using the strategy.
- Students *independently* use the strategy.

Literacy instruction in Years 5/6 is divided into 4 parts.

1. Independent Reading/Conferencing
2. Explicit whole group instruction.
3. Independent Literacy Practice
4. Sharing of literacy tasks.

Music

Students will attend specialist music classes on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

In the early years of schooling children relate to the world primarily through their bodies. Music and dance provide a natural way for them to explore this connection. Singing, dancing, listening to music, telling stories, responding to sounds, creating sounds and gestures are all pathways to learning. The focus is on creative and experiential learning of beat and rhythm and singing and the gradual introduction of playing specific melodies or rhythms on instruments.

In Years 3-6, the music program is influenced by the Musical Futures (<http://www.musicalfuturesaustralia.org/what-is-musical-futures.html>). This approach places informal, self-directed and peer-group learning at the centre of music education.

Students work in small groups using online resources, musical instruments and computer software to develop performances of well-known or original songs. Each term, students are given a project broken into weekly tasks, culminating in a performance during the final two weeks of term. The project combines elements from many parts of The Arts including visual art, dance, drama, media, musical and visual communication. The two key dimensions reported on in Music are Creating and Making and Exploring and Responding. Students are provided opportunities each term to demonstrate their skill and understandings in these areas.

Working in this way not only develops superior musical skills but also provides rich opportunities for personal growth, interpersonal learning and working in an effective team. Part of the project may involve input from home, including costume design or making instruments from recycled objects.

More formal music tuition is provided on an elective fee for service basis for violin, voice, guitar, piano, keyboard, brass and woodwind instruments. Information on these is available from the school.

Numeracy

The Maths program at The Patch is delivered in a variety of ways. Explicit teaching of key mathematical skills underpins our approach, facilitated via whole group, small group and in some cases, individualised learning activities. We encourage our children to explore problem solving in a safe environment where errors are seen as learning opportunities, and open-ended tasks encourage risk taking and multiple solutions to problems.

Comprehension in numeracy is just as important as it is in literacy. We plan for students to develop their comprehension through focused activities, class discussions and the attainment of a rich mathematical vocabulary. ICT is made available to engage and support learning, with Mathletics accessible for students in the classroom and from home.

Regular formal and informal assessment is used to develop a maths curriculum that caters for each student's point of need. Where necessary, students will be supported in small group work to consolidate and extend their understanding of key skills and concepts.

Our goal is to develop confident, creative thinkers who can apply their numeracy skills to solve problems in a variety of real world contexts.

Philosophy

Philosophy is an exciting subject that encourages students to ask questions, listen carefully, evaluate reasons, uncover assumptions, clarify ideas and concepts, make judgements and draw inferences.

Philosophical inquiry is primarily concerned with the search for meaning through activities help us to develop a framework in which questions of how we think and know are considered alongside equally fundamental questions of how we ought to treat one another and the world itself.

The practice of philosophy in schools is implemented through the community of inquiry where both abstract (conceptual) and concrete thinking are explored.

Although it is ideal to form communities of inquiry across all disciplines and subject areas when it comes to teaching children to be inquirers the discipline of philosophy has a special role to play. Philosophy commits us to persistent and disciplined thinking with social, ethical, aesthetic, affective and political components.

Philosophy is not so much concerned with final answers as it is with coming up with and exploring better questions and tentative answers.

Our Philosophy sessions also incorporate Inquiry, based within the 'Kids Matter' curriculum: Social & Emotional Learning.

Physical Education

Physical Education is the process through which sport, sport education, outdoor adventure activities, dance, gymnastics, aquatics, ball handling and athletics are used to help students learn motor skills and to learn about and achieve physical fitness. Physical Education activities also assist in the development of personal and social skills in students.

During years 4-6, students refine basic and complex motor skills and apply them to increasingly complex games, activities and sport-specific situations. Students participate in outdoor adventure activities in natural environments, which develop skills, knowledge and behaviours to enhance and promote safety. They use skills such as strategic thinking to solve real-life problems to improve game performance. Activities in this group include basketball dribble, modified netball, bat tennis and modified baseball – (T-ball).

A healthy, physically active lifestyle is conducive to more effective participation in all that society has to offer and greater levels of success within and beyond school. This requires students to develop the knowledge, skill and behaviours that enable them to:

- Maintain good health and live a healthy lifestyle
- Understand the role of physical activity in ensuring good health
- Engage in physical activity
- Examine physical, social, emotional and mental health and personal development
- Examine the factors that influence food selection and the role of nutrition on health growth and development

PE skills will be on Tuesdays as part of the rotations.

All Grades 5-6 students do Sport on Fridays.

Science

During 2015, every class will participate in weekly science lessons using the Primary Connections program as a framework. This is an inquiry-based approach that helps students develop deep learning, and guides them to find scientific ways to answer their questions.

Science at The Patch Primary school covers all areas of AusVELS and is assessed in three main areas:

- Science inquiry skills.
- Scientific knowledge and understanding.
- Science as a human endeavour.

The learning outcomes in Primary Connections contribute to developing students' scientific literacy. Scientific literacy is described as an individual's:

- scientific knowledge and use of that knowledge to identify questions, acquire new knowledge, explain scientific phenomena and draw evidence-based conclusions about science-related issues
- understanding of the characteristic features of science as a form of human knowledge and enquiry
- awareness of how science and technology shape our material, intellectual and cultural environments
- willingness to engage in science-related issues, and with the ideas of science, as a reflective citizen

There are 4 units covered by The Primary Connections program (chemical, physical, biological and earth and space) for each year of primary school from Foundation (Prep) to Year 6. Each unit has an explicit focus on developing students' knowledge, skills, understanding and capacities in science and literacy. Units employ a range of strategies to encourage students to think about and to represent science.

Sustainability

At The Patch Primary School sustainability is a major focus. It underpins our school values, vision and practices and provides opportunities for students to take action in ways that benefit the world we live in. The Environmental Education program, environmental groups such as Gang Green (for students in years 3), EarthKeepers (for students in year 5), Garden Club (open to all students during lunch once a week), Garden Team (parents and staff) and the Sustainability program provide a range of activities that raise awareness, responsibility and respect for the environment and embed practices in the school that aim to improve biodiversity, reduce energy use, better manage waste and conserve water.

We are registered as a Resource Smart School with Sustainability Victoria, are actively involved in the Learning for Sustainability Program with the Yarra Ranges Council, have received numerous awards with the Victorian School Garden Program and are a member of the “Water, Live It, Learn It” initiative. Our school resource use is regularly uploaded to the ResourceSmart data base and used to monitor and influence our use of these valuable resources (energy, water, waste).

Visual Arts

Creative learning experiences in the visual arts during schooling provide individuals with necessary skills, understandings and confidence to participate fully in the arts throughout their lives.

Learning in the visual arts at The Patch Primary School takes several forms. Through arts practice students learn to develop ideas by drawing upon experience, exploring feelings, observing and researching. In order to communicate ideas, students learn the elements, principles, processes and techniques as well as the cultural and aesthetic values associated with specific art forms.

In responding to the visual arts, students learn to analyse and interpret art works. They learn how the visual arts are practised and valued in different societies and cultures, past and present. They form personal judgements of their own and those of others. They understand the skills and intentions of artists and the social or cultural contexts in which their works were produced.

SECTION FOUR

Extra-Curricular Activities

Camps

Earth Keepers Camp 1

½ Grade 5
April 22nd -24th
3 days, 2 nights
Cost: TBC

Earth Keepers Camp 2

½ Grade 5
April 27th – 29th
3 days, 2 nights
Cost: TBC

Sovereign Hill, Ballarat

Grade 6
16th -18th November
3 days, 2 nights
Cost: TBC

Earth Keepers Camp is an essential part of the camp program. It is a 3 day camp full of problem solving, adventuring, team building and fun. Half of the Year 5 students will attend Camp 1. The remaining half of Year 5 students attend Camp 2.

5/6 students will have the opportunity to participate in our camping program. This year Grade 6 Camp is being held at Sovereign Hill during Term 4 on the 16th, 17th and 18th November. It fits into the History section of the National Curriculum.

For any payments please put in an envelope with your child's name, class, amount and what it is for. These envelopes can be passed onto the class teacher or dropped into the silver box outside the office. **Please note there are no payments accepted on Fridays** and all payments are to be finalised by the due date or students will be unable to participate in the programs.

Please Note: If you are experiencing financial difficulties please speak with your child's teacher/s as the school may be able to offer some assistance.

Excursions / Incursions

Year 5/6 is a traditionally a big year for excursions and incursions, we are mindful of the cost involved with many of these activities and try to keep costing's down, whilst still delivering a variety of activities.

Below is a current list of excursions/incursions and the estimated cost involved. Please note these are approximations and final cost will be given on permission slip.

For any payments please put in an envelope with your child's name, class, amount and what it is for. These envelopes can be passed onto the class teacher or dropped into the silver box outside the office. **Please note there are no payments accepted on Fridays** and all payments are to be finalised by the due date or students will be unable to participate in the programs.

To keep costs down and remain environmentally friendly we will only be issuing one copy of each note per child. All misplaced notes need to be re-printed from the school website.

Please Note: If you are experiencing financial difficulties please speak with your child's teacher/s as the school may be able to offer some assistance.

Here is a list of activities and dates so far:

Taming the Butterflies

Grade 6

Date: 10 Mondays Term 1 & 2 - with presentation night TBC

Puberty and Relationship Education

Date TBC

Cost TBC

Empower Programme

Grade 5

Date: 6 Mondays Term 1 & 2

Standing Tall

Grade 6

Date: TBC

City Excursion

Grade 5 & 6

TBC

Prep Buddy Excursion

TBC

Cost : TBC

Grade 6 Graduation – venue TBC

December – Term 4

Grade 6

Knox Leisure Works Excursion

20th December (last day of school)

Grade 5 & 6

Cost: Approx. \$25.00

Taming of the Butterflies

For several years, Grade 6 students at The Patch have participated in a public speaking course known as Taming of the Butterflies. We are fortunate to be hosting this outstanding program run by “Toastmasters Lilydale” again this year. The course consists of seven one and a half hour sessions with two highly regarded presenters, Bill and Nola. The program culminates in a formal “Speech Night.”

This program has had an extremely positive effect on all Grade 6 students in the past, building and promoting students’ self-esteem and public speaking abilities.

SECTION FIVE Assessment

Assessment at Your Child's Level

Assessment at Grade 5/6 level includes the following:

- NAPLAN – grade 5 only
- OnDemand Testing (online Australian Council for Educational Research – ACER – testing)
- PAT Reading and Numeracy (also ACER testing)
- SWST (Standardised Single Word Spelling Test)
- Running Records of reading (during individual reading conferences – known as “FP Testing”)
- Individual reading and writing conferences
- Teacher observations and records
- Pre and Post Testing
- Moderation rubrics
- Class tests

At The Patch Primary School we upload information for analysis to both the Victorian Department of Education and our own web-based data bases. Data analysis is used to inform the future teaching of your child.

NAPLAN 2015

The Naplan tests for Grade 5 will be held on Tuesday 12 May, Wednesday 13 May and Thursday 14 May 2015.

Students have their skills assessed in numeracy, reading, writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar. National tests provide information on how students are progressing and support improvements in teaching and learning.

Parents and carers can best assist students by making them feel comfortable about the nature and purpose of the tests. Their children can be assured that the assessments will give them an opportunity to show what they have learned in class.

For more information you may go to: www.naplan.edu.au

SECTION SIX

How to Help Your Child

Homework

This table describes successful homework practice for our year levels.

Years	Homework...
5 to 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• should include daily independent reading• should be coordinated across subjects in secondary schools to avoid unreasonable workloads for students• may extend class work, projects and assignments, essays and research• will generally range from:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 30 to 45 minutes a day at Year 5• 45 to 90 minutes a day in Year 9.

These Homework Guidelines have been developed by the Department with the assistance of parents, teachers and students in Victorian primary and secondary schools. The Guidelines provide a framework to help schools engage their communities when reviewing their existing homework policies.

We expect our 5/6 students to complete the following on a weekly basis:

- 20-30 minutes of reading every day, recorded in their diary
- 45 minutes a week of Mathletics. This may be spread across several nights or completed in one night. It is your choice.
- Every two weeks each student is to produce a reading letter to your home group teacher. This is a reflection on your reading at school and home. This should be deeper and more thoughtful than a book summary and a simple, "I am enjoying my book" sort of writing. Information sheet will be given to parents and placed on the school website and Tiqbiz.
- Spelling – Working on your spelling list each week.

Parent Assistance

We are looking for parents with many talents to help in our classrooms with a variety of activities. Can you help us? We are looking for:

- Volunteers to work in classrooms – if you have time to offer please speak to your child's teacher.
- Sporting / Coaching / Assistance with major sporting events – various sporting opportunities are offered throughout the year for which we need assistance.
- Fundraising - Graduation.

If you are available to assist in any way we would love to hear from you via email or a note in your child's diary.

You can also become involved in:

- Wetlands Activities
- School Fete
- School Council Membership
- Garden Team
- Working Bee Involvement

Tips on Helping Your Child at Home.

Some Tips on Helping your child at home

- As your child moves towards the end of their primary school years it is really important to help them develop independence, initiative, problem solving and time management skills. Help guide them through these processes but in the words of the wise “Do not do for them, what they can do for themselves”.
- The aim is to get your child to think for themselves, to reason, to understand deeply, to build knowledge, to leverage their thinking with others and put knowledge to work in their own lives.
- Give your child roles and responsibilities as it makes them feel valued and worthwhile and helps to make them independent.
- Give your children clear boundaries and realistic expectations for behaviour.
- Develop resilience.
- Never underestimate the importance of speaking and listening to your child as it underpins all their learning. Remember you are their primary teachers; engage them in lots of talk. Through talk help them to wonder and question the world around them.
- Talk to them about their learning, what they find difficult, easy, puzzling etc. Help them clarify their thinking by throwing in lots of why questions and ‘because’s’
- Encourage them to be critical thinkers, independent-minded readers, speakers and listeners.
- Introduce them to ‘powerful words’ and the power of words this develops their vocabulary and encourages them to use interesting words.
- When learning spelling encourage looking at word patterns, word building, usage and the origin of words.
- Display, in prominent places, things that need to be learnt, like times tables, spelling words etc.
- Use real life, everyday situations, like cooking and shopping to help them develop their mathematical skills and thinking.
- Involve them in the use and handling of money when shopping. Compare prices, weights etc. and discuss ‘best buy’.
- Still read to and with them. Talk to them about their reading, even read what they are reading. Discuss things like, what inferences are made, what predictions are reasonable and what conflict and resolution takes place. Stop and discuss interesting words and descriptive, emotional (beautiful) passages.
- Share their music with them and discuss the lyrics.
- Encourage your child to make connections in their learning and with the world around them.
- Finally discuss social issues with them to help develop their awareness, thinking and understanding of the world around them