



## Highvale Primary School Parent Information Session, 10/2/2015

### Year 3 & 4

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#### Guided Inquiry

At Highvale Primary School, we follow the Guided Inquiry approach within all aspects of our teaching. This approach underpins our beliefs and values of quality teaching. Guided Inquiry supports students to investigate and gain a deeper understanding of curriculum subject areas. It encourages students to use a variety of resources. Student voice and reflection is encouraged.

The Early Years Literacy Model is followed at this level. Children participate in reading, writing and speaking and listening.

#### Reading

During reading sessions students will complete a variety of tasks to help develop understanding of different texts and comprehension strategies. To help facilitate this, students have been tested and placed in reading groups, which will change in accordance with ongoing assessments. Students will complete tasks independently, in small groups and also in focus groups with the classroom teacher. Students will discuss a variety of texts through Guided and Reciprocal Reading groups. We will be continuing our Lexile program this year. Children complete an online assessment and record the books they have read. They are able to complete quizzes and other online activities for some of these books at school and at home and are retested every few months to record progress.

#### Home Reading

Students have been asked to read for at least 20 minutes for a minimum of four days a week. Whilst we understand that it is often hard to find time, we would appreciate it if you could listen to your child read for a few minutes each day. Please record the book read and a signature in the appropriate space in your child's diary.

#### Library

Students will have a one-hour library lesson each week in our Information Resource Centre. They will have the opportunity to choose books for home reading and it would be appreciated if children continued to use a library bag.

#### Speaking and Listening

Children will be given the opportunity to speak to the whole class and to smaller groups on a variety of topics. They are encouraged to listen attentively and purposefully at all times. Students are encouraged to participate in the 'Author's Chair' share time at the end of each writing session where they will be given the opportunity to share their writing with the class and receive feedback and ideas. Children will also be given the opportunity to participate in formal presentations and assessed discussions throughout the year.

Some specific oral language experiences include:

- Circle Time
- Share Time at the conclusion of Literacy and Maths lessons;
- Class discussions; games and activities;
- Team building tasks
- During Challenge Based Learning team groups and many more.

#### Writing

We have developed a whole school approach for writing lessons at Highvale. Students will plan, write, revise, edit and publish their work. Students will use a Writer's Notebook to improve the quality and ideas

within their writing and planning. This notebook will act as a stimulus should they have difficulty thinking of topics to write about. They will work on improving sentence structure, paragraphing and using more interesting vocabulary. Students will learn about parts of speech (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and conjunctions) and will be taught punctuation such as full stops, commas, apostrophes and the correct use of inverted commas for speech. Students will learn and use a variety of text types such as recounts, narratives, persuasive texts, information reports, procedures, letter writing and poetry. Students are encouraged to bring in photos, pictures, ticket stubs etc from experiences from home to add to their Writer's Notebook.

### **Handwriting**

Specific handwriting lessons will be held to revise letter formation and join letters in Victorian Cursive script. Grade four children are working towards gaining their pen licence during the year, while grade three children are adjusting to smaller line spaces.

### **Word Study**

Students in Level 3 are at varying stages with their spelling and will have a personal spelling list. The spelling lists will be made from CBL Topic words, word study focus, spelling misconceptions from their writing, and words they can use to make their writing more engaging. Most students will have 4 – 6 spelling words to be covered in a one week period. Students will be supported with their spelling at school, and spelling lists will be sent home when needed.

### **Mathematics**

As is the guided inquiry model at Highvale Primary School, all Maths lessons are taught following explicit teaching instruction; differentiated learning, open ended questioning and project based maths activities.

The Australian/Victorian Essential Learning Standards model outlines the following strands of mathematics at grades 3 & 4:

- 1) Number and Algebra** – the study of our number system, place value, the four processes (+ - x ÷), fractions, decimals and money.
- 2) Measurement and Geometry** – time, length, mass, capacity, 2D and 3D shapes, maps and tessellations.
- 3) Statistics and Probability** – data representation as graphs and tables and the language of chance.

Students will continue to learn how to use mathematical tools appropriately such as rulers, protractors, calculators and hands on resources. They will be encouraged to investigate, make predictions and check reasoning. Students will also be encouraged to discuss and explain their thinking, reasoning and processes to their peers. Students will be grouped within their classes according to their particular needs.

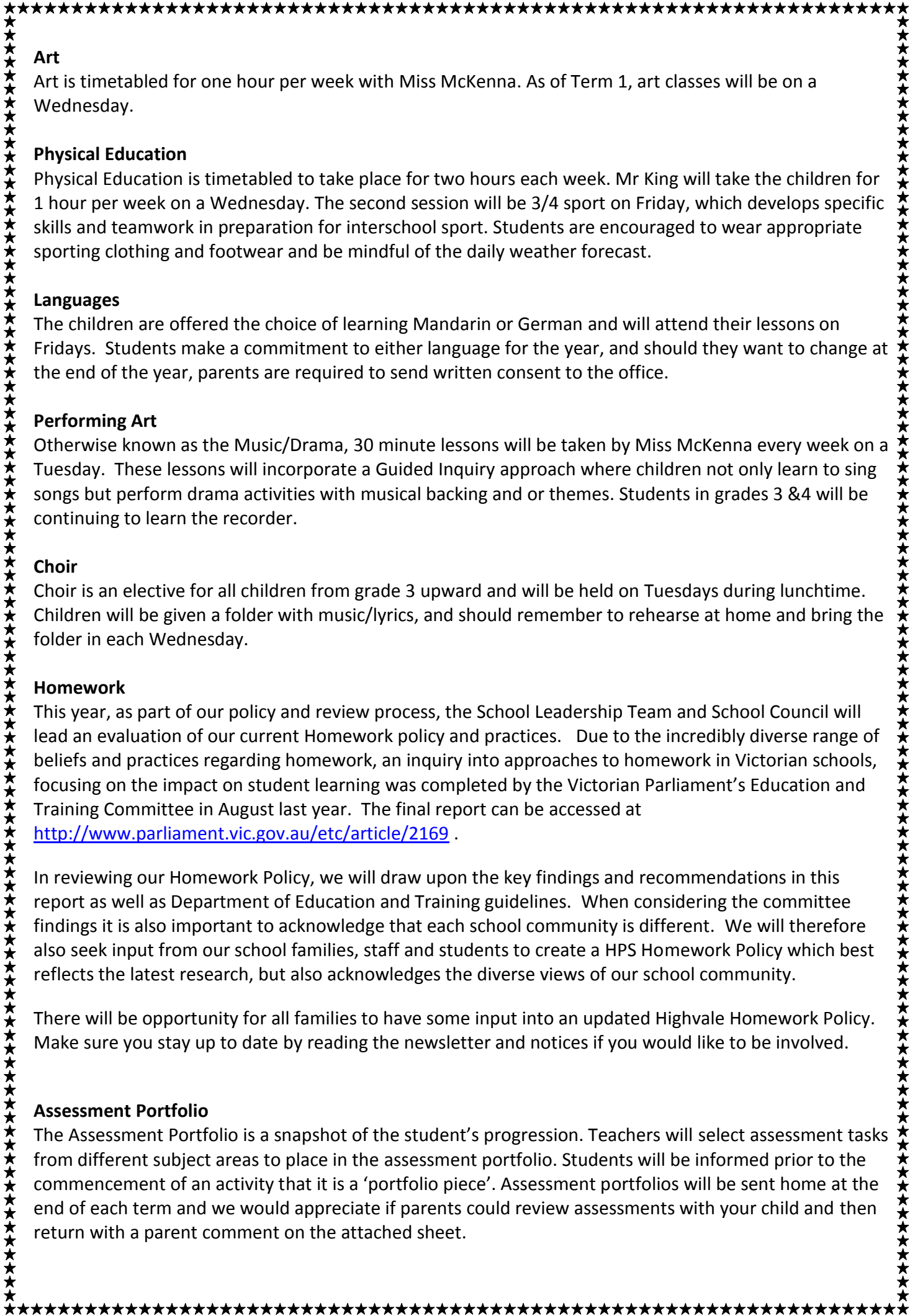
### **Challenge Based Learning**

Health, Science, Humanities, History, Civics and Citizenship and Design, Creativity and Technology are included under this title.

Challenge Based Learning involves students researching a topic of interest to them within the term concept. With their research complete, students choose one solution to develop. They present their findings in a method of their choice, and consult with the teacher. Finally they implement their solution in the real world. At times, students will be working in small groups within their class or within the level. The concepts being explored this year are **Identity, Sustainability, Strength, and Discovery.**

### **ICT**

ICT will be integrated into all curriculum areas. Before accessing and utilising the Internet and emails, students are required to sign an Internet Use Contract to promote understanding and prevent any misuse of these valuable tools. To support this, students will begin the year learning about cyber safety and correct and respectful use of email and the Internet. Students will have access to classroom laptops, Information Resource Centre, netbooks, iPads, AppleTV's and IWB.



**Art**

Art is timetabled for one hour per week with Miss McKenna. As of Term 1, art classes will be on a Wednesday.

**Physical Education**

Physical Education is timetabled to take place for two hours each week. Mr King will take the children for 1 hour per week on a Wednesday. The second session will be 3/4 sport on Friday, which develops specific skills and teamwork in preparation for interschool sport. Students are encouraged to wear appropriate sporting clothing and footwear and be mindful of the daily weather forecast.

**Languages**

The children are offered the choice of learning Mandarin or German and will attend their lessons on Fridays. Students make a commitment to either language for the year, and should they want to change at the end of the year, parents are required to send written consent to the office.

**Performing Art**

Otherwise known as the Music/Drama, 30 minute lessons will be taken by Miss McKenna every week on a Tuesday. These lessons will incorporate a Guided Inquiry approach where children not only learn to sing songs but perform drama activities with musical backing and or themes. Students in grades 3 &4 will be continuing to learn the recorder.

**Choir**

Choir is an elective for all children from grade 3 upward and will be held on Tuesdays during lunchtime. Children will be given a folder with music/lyrics, and should remember to rehearse at home and bring the folder in each Wednesday.

**Homework**

This year, as part of our policy and review process, the School Leadership Team and School Council will lead an evaluation of our current Homework policy and practices. Due to the incredibly diverse range of beliefs and practices regarding homework, an inquiry into approaches to homework in Victorian schools, focusing on the impact on student learning was completed by the Victorian Parliament's Education and Training Committee in August last year. The final report can be accessed at <http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/etc/article/2169> .

In reviewing our Homework Policy, we will draw upon the key findings and recommendations in this report as well as Department of Education and Training guidelines. When considering the committee findings it is also important to acknowledge that each school community is different. We will therefore also seek input from our school families, staff and students to create a HPS Homework Policy which best reflects the latest research, but also acknowledges the diverse views of our school community.

There will be opportunity for all families to have some input into an updated Highvale Homework Policy. Make sure you stay up to date by reading the newsletter and notices if you would like to be involved.

**Assessment Portfolio**

The Assessment Portfolio is a snapshot of the student's progression. Teachers will select assessment tasks from different subject areas to place in the assessment portfolio. Students will be informed prior to the commencement of an activity that it is a 'portfolio piece'. Assessment portfolios will be sent home at the end of each term and we would appreciate if parents could review assessments with your child and then return with a parent comment on the attached sheet.

### **Interviews**

A ‘Meet and Greet’ interview is held early in the year are mainly a chance for you to meet your child’s new teacher and inform them of any information of which they should be aware. Other interviews are held in June.

### **Diary**

All children have a school diary and it is essential that it is taken home and brought to school on a regular basis to help with organisational skills, reading logs and facilitate communication between home and school.

### **Restorative Practices**

'Restorative Practices' enables students to develop positive relationships with each other, with staff and with families. Restorative Practices focuses on building relationships and repairing harm when something goes wrong. This involves understanding what happened, who has been hurt and what needs to happen to repair the harm. Restorative Practices are underpinned by the following concepts:

- Misbehaviour is viewed as harming the relationship between people
- Where harm has occurred there is a responsibility for the person or persons who caused the harm to ‘fix it’
- Problem-solving focuses on healing and making things right

### **Water and “Brain-food”**

Children are encouraged to have a water bottle on their desk at all times. Brain food – non-messy fruit or vegetables that can be eaten in fingers, may be eaten between 9.00 & 11.00 am.

### **Transition**

Throughout the year, students are involved in a range of transition activities to assist them in moving comfortably into the next year level. Some of the activities that take place are:

- Formal Teacher Transition meetings in November / December.
- Transition Day & Orientation Day in November / December where the students get to meet their new teacher.
- The Buddies Program that allow students to be involved in activities with students from each year level. They also have the opportunity to meet and get to know other teachers.
- Our whole school concepts particularly ‘Strength’ which supports preparation for transition.
- Gallery Walks which allow the students to see work from other students in different year levels.

### **Anaphylaxis**

There are some students within the level and the school who have allergies to certain foods. Parents of students with an Anaphylaxis Plan are encouraged to provide the classroom teacher with appropriate treats packed in a sealed bag. These can then be provided to their child in situations such as a class peer has brought in a birthday cake.

### **Money, excursions and incursions**

When bringing money to school for special events please put the money in a clearly labelled envelope. For excursions and incursion where the levy hasn’t been paid upfront, please use the school money envelopes which will be sent home with the permission forms. Alternatively Bpay is available.

### **Uniforms**

Please ensure all items of school uniform, especially hats are named. If items are lost, please check the lost property cupboard in the senior school corridor opposite Miss Veitch’s room.

## Absences

It is a legal requirement that if your child is absent from school an explanation note must be sent to the teacher on his/her return. Students must be signed out at the office if leaving school early for any reason. If children are late to school they must be signed in by an adult at the office.

## School Wide Positive Behaviour Support

The **School-Wide Positive Behaviour (SWPB)** framework aims to create a positive school climate, a culture of student competence, and an open, responsive management system for school leaders, staff, students, and parents.

The purpose of implementing School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support at Highvale P.S is to:

- Embed a common language and behavioural expectations for the whole school community.
- To provide a safe and orderly environment to enhance learning.
- To use evidence based decision making using PBS data.
- To provide a common teaching base in the form of a behavioural matrix.
- To embed a culture of positive behaviour through explicit teaching

The internationally-renowned positive behaviour support program is currently underway in many Victorian schools. Our first goal this year will be for the students', staff, and parents to be involved in developing our school wide expected behaviours, which will be visible in all classrooms and areas around the school. A parent information evening will be held to enable parents to be introduced to SWPB in more depth, as well as involve them in developing parent specific expectations. Here is an example of the work we have done already as we begin 'phase one' of the implementation of the framework.

**Highvale P.S. Behaviour Purpose Statement** (2014)- *At Highvale Primary School, we aim to develop students who are resilient, caring and connected to each other. Our goal is to establish and maintain a positive and supportive community, where we are inclusive and mindful of others. Within this safe environment students are encouraged to fulfil their academic potential.*

	Always	Learning Areas	Play Areas	Walkways	eLearning	Grounds	Toilets
EXPECTATION							

**Matrix of expectations** (2015) - *This makes it clear, for staff and students, exactly what behaviour is expected in all settings, both in and out of the classroom.*

## TIQBIZ – SCHOOL – PARENT COMMUNICATION APP

Good communication between the school and parents is essential if we are to achieve the best for our students. This is why we have joined Tiqbiz to support us with this.

Tiqbiz is an app which will allow the school to push announcements, notices and newsletters to smartphones, tablet devices and computers with ease. Rather than receiving a paper copy or by email you can now receive your newsletter wherever you are. This app will also allow us to send messages to a particular group of parents e.g. to let them know about a bus that is running late or a reminder about an excursion. A message can even be sent to the whole community with the push of a button.

This is a free app and is easily downloaded. We have a copy for everyone here with the instructions for how to download the app. Please take one on your way out if you have not already been given one. We encourage you all to take advantage of this FREE service. We will continue sending the Newsletter as a hard copy home this term, though will be working towards utilising Tiqbiz as our preferred form of communication as the year progresses.

Children learn best when they are happy and secure in their learning environment and at home. We will endeavour to provide the optimum learning environment for all the children in the class. If at any time you feel there is a school matter which you would like to discuss, or that circumstances at home may be affecting your child's learning, please do not hesitate to contact us to discuss the matter. Appointments can be made by telephoning the school office on 9887 8000 or via email (below).

We are looking forward to a successful and happy year with you,

**Tim Arendshorst**

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