Curriculum Overview

Mother of God Primary School

Ivanhoe East

2016

A place where each child is known
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

At Mother of God we all strive to “Be like a Jesus person” and frequently pose the question “What would Jesus do?” We honour Mary our Mother through our school prayer which is said at our Monday morning assembly and have a picture of Mary in each classroom. We explore scripture to make connections to our lives today and the actions and choices we make. These actions are linked to the school focus of being respectful, responsible and ready to learn. We gather to celebrate our faith with a weekly class mass and join with the Parish once a term to celebrate the Sunday Liturgy. Twice a year we have a combined Catholic Parish of Ivanhoe School mass.
STUDENT WELLBEING

Mother of God Primary School is committed to providing a safe, caring and supportive learning environment which ensures that the experience of learning is successful for all students. To this end, we promote a positive culture where we demonstrate the belief that all students can learn and experience success. The staff works with students to develop understandings about rights and responsibilities and the part they play in these. We are a School Wide Positive Behaviour School and this provided the school with a strategy to develop our 3Rs: Respect, Responsible and Ready to Learn. Students are acknowledged and rewarded when they demonstrate these behaviours and as a school community, these behaviours are valued highly.

We support and implement Restorative Practices, which aims to resolve conflict with an empathetic approach. The rationale includes fostering awareness with the student; avoiding scolding or lecturing; involving the student actively; accepting ambiguity; separating the deed from the doer; seeing every instance of wrongdoing and conflict as an opportunity for learning; and, ensuring Restorative Practices are systematic not situational. When working with students to resolve conflict, staff ask the following Affective Questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affective Questions</th>
<th>Focus Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What happened?</td>
<td>Focus on the specific behaviour or incident without blaming.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. How did it happen?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. How did you act in this situation?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Who do you think was affected?</td>
<td>Draw out who was affected and how they were affected.</td>
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<td>5. How were they affected?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. How were you affected?</td>
<td>(Blank)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. What needs to happen to make things right?</td>
<td>Direct questions toward problem solving what needs to happen to ‘make things right’.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. If you find yourself in the same situation again how could you behave differently?</td>
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The aim of this document is to give families an overview of learning and teaching at Mother of God. At Mother of God we believe in the potential of each child and working in partnership with families.

CURRICULUM AT MOTHER OF GOD PRIMARY

AusVELS provides a single curriculum for levels Foundation–10. AusVELS incorporates the Australian Curriculum as it is progressively developed within a framework that reflects particular Victorian priorities and approaches to teaching and learning (F is the abbreviation for ‘Foundation’ which is now the common term agreed to by all States and Territories to refer to the first level of school for curriculum design purposes). AusVELS has been designed to ensure that schools and teachers are not required to manage two different curriculum and reporting frameworks during the development of the Australian Curriculum.


Learning Intentions and Success Criteria are used from the Foundation year through to year 6. They are student friendly statements about learning, based on a specific curriculum focus. Learning intentions tune students into ‘what’ they are learning and ‘why’. Success Criteria are written with or for students in order to gauge student achievement as set through learning intentions. Directing students with criteria surrounding their learning assists in providing success as students are aware of what the expectations are surrounding their learning as well as what the achievement level looks like.

Prior to learning taking place teachers gauge student prior knowledge in order to make all learning meaningful. Students complete pre assessments which assist in guiding teacher planning for whole class and focus group instruction. Post assessments are used to gauge outcomes of student learning and also provide direction for future learning.
ENGLISH

Our English curriculum from the Foundation year to year 6 directs students to:
- learn to listen to, read, view, speak, write, create and reflect on increasingly complex and sophisticated spoken, written and multimodal texts across a growing range of contexts with accuracy, fluency and purpose
- appreciate, enjoy and use the English language in all its variations and develop a sense of its richness and power to evoke feelings, convey information, form ideas, facilitate interaction with others, entertain, persuade and argue
- understand how Standard Australian English works in its spoken and written forms and in combination with non-linguistic forms of communication to create meaning
- develop interest and skills in inquiring into the aesthetic aspects of texts, and develop an informed appreciation of literature.

READING

Junior School: In reading we begin with a whole class shared reading. Here we are modelling reading for the students and discussing strategies that they could use to work out unknown words eg. sounding out or stretching, words in words, read on and back, look at the pictures. We also discuss strategies for gaining meaning eg. synonyms, seen the word before, etc. Then the students break into groups. The groups are organised according to ability. Once or twice a week the students participate in a teacher focus group where they read and complete activities specifically catering for their particular needs. The other groups are completing tasks that require them to use and practise skills that we have discussed in the whole class focus. Activities such as word games, websites (ICT), books, comprehension and handwriting allow the students to reinforce skills that have already been taught.

Middle and Senior School: The structure of reading as students enter the middle and senior years continues to follow the whole class, small group and reflection structure. As students become proficient readers the focus of reading sessions is on their level of comprehension. Teachers cater for individual comprehension needs during small teaching focus groups. Students use a variety of text types (including poems, articles, web sites and novels to name a few) as they explore levels of comprehension. Individual tasks are designed to cater for student interest and learning needs. Links between curriculum areas including the inquiry focus for the term are made, which assists students in understanding that reading occurs in all learning and is not isolated to a single reading block.
WRITING

In the early years of schooling students are exposed to the writing process. This includes planning, composing, recording, revising and publishing. As an author they are taught about the importance of following each of these steps when writing a story. As students become proficient writers in the middle and senior years of schooling this process is firmly embed. Students explore and begin to create pieces which reflect their own personal writing style.

Junior School: During the first three years of schooling students learn the importance of following the writing process in order to publish stories. Students from an early age learn that they are authors and their writing conveys important messages for their chosen audience. Writing sessions can begin with the teacher modelling a text type or the teacher and students working together to produce a text. Students work independently when writing texts while teachers work with students in focus groups which have been planned for based on common learning needs. Teachers touch base with all students through one on one conferences, where goals are set and students are given feedback in order to improve their writing.

Middle and Senior School: Students in the middle and senior years have well developed understandings of the writing process which they can adapt when writing a variety of text types. They understand that different written texts convey specific messages for a chosen audience. During whole class instruction at the beginning of sessions students explore the different elements required for text types. Small focussed teaching groups cater for individual learning needs and provide instruction for students at their point of readiness for learning. Students take part in one on one teacher and peer conferences, setting goals and providing feedback.
MATHEMATICS

Our Mathematics curriculum from the Foundation year to year 6 ensures that students:
- are confident, creative users and communicators of mathematics, able to investigate, represent and interpret situations in their personal and work lives and as active citizens
- develop an increasingly sophisticated understanding of mathematical concepts and fluency with processes, and are able to pose and solve problems and reason in Number and Algebra, Measurement and Geometry, and Statistics and Probability
- recognise connections between the areas of mathematics and other disciplines and appreciate mathematics as an accessible and enjoyable discipline to study.

The structure of Mathematics lessons from the Foundation year through to year six incorporates the following structure: **Tools Session- Tuning In- Learning Activity- Reflection.** During a tools session students revisit number facts on a daily basis. A few examples of this includes: counting, number games and using interactive number websites. Prior to the learning activity students are ‘tuned into’ the learning outcome for the session. Examples of what this learning looks like include: the teacher modelling new concepts, students working together in groups and sharing their understandings with the class and whole class discussions. Students then move onto working on personalised tasks which cater for their individual maths learning needs. During this time the teacher takes a small focussed teaching group, where new concepts are taught based on the student’s ability level. After taking this group the teacher moves onto rovering observations of students where conversations about learning occur. At the conclusion of the lesson students reflect on their learning and consolidating new understandings.
INQUIRY BASED LEARNING

“Inquiry-based learning is a constructivist approach, in which students have ownership of their learning. It starts with exploration and questioning and leads to investigation into a worthy question, issue, problem or idea. It involves asking questions, gathering and analysing information, generating solutions, making decisions, justifying conclusions and taking action”.

(http://www.inquiringmind.co.nz/WhatIsInquiry.htm)

At Mother of God Primary the following Domains form the basis of our inquiry based learning:

Physical, Personal and Social Learning
- Civics and Citizenship
- Health

Discipline-based Learning
- The Humanities
- The Humanities - Economics
- The Humanities - Geography
- The Humanities - History
- Science (junior school)

Interdisciplinary Learning
- Design, Creativity and Technology

As part of ‘taking action’ during specific inquires, students showcase their learning through an ‘expo’. During these sessions parents are invited to take part as the intended audience as students act as the expert sharing new learning and understandings based on their chosen inquiry.
CO CURRICULAR LEARNING

All students take part in weekly specialist lessons which include: Italian, Physical Education and Library. Students in years 3 and 4 take part in an additional specialist lesson which is based on Art through Literature in the Foundation year and years 1 and 2 this takes the form of a Visual Arts lesson. Song Room is an additional specialist lesson which students in years 5 and 6 take part in. Students in the Foundation year up to year four take part in an additional Performing Arts lesson.

Italian:

At Mother of God Primary we believe that the acquisition of an additional language and the intercultural skills associated with it, is key to how students develop both intellectually and emotionally. We also believe that languages help prepare our students to be responsible and engaged members of our multicultural community and to look outwards as active and informed citizens of the world. In addition to this it gives our students who are learning a second language at primary level, greater confidence and choice when it comes to future study and work.
All students at Mother of God participate in a weekly one hour lesson of Italian. The lessons are planned around the varied levels of ability and prior knowledge of Italian and aim to ensure that all students are engaged and actively involved in many activities. These aim to assist students in practising how to speak in Italian. The main focus of the Italian lessons is on oracy, which is then supported with the reading and writing of simple texts.
Library:

The Mother of God Primary School Library operates as a cultural hub that actively promotes reading and the love of literature. The school library is centrally located within the school and provides an inviting space where the school community can come to read, use available technology, discuss, share and learn.

**Purpose of the library program:**

- To enhance learning outcomes of all students by providing access to a high quality, literature rich environment in all forms, both print and digital.

- To assist students to developing concepts, skills, knowledge and attitudes towards literature as well as engage purposefully in information gathering required for responsible life-long learning. This enables them to develop informed personal perspectives of the world and engage in their learning meaningfully.

- To incorporate teaching, service and resource management which supports the curriculum and interests of the school community.

The students participate in a weekly one hour lesson whereby they explore a range of literature and borrow. The students are also able to visit the library at lunchtime on Wednesdays and after school on Thursdays. A highlight of the Library Program is Book Week. Leading up to Book Week, classes share the shortlisted books and complete a range of activities based on these books. The library program is further enhanced with visiting authors, illustrators or performances related to The Children’s Book Council theme for Book Week.
Physical Education:

Students participate in Physical Education sessions with a specialist physical education teacher. These take place in an indoor gymnasium. The focus in physical education is on the fundamental motor skills and being able to use these in game situations.

Interschool Sports:

Mother of God is part of the Ivanhoe District School Sports Association and participates in both Summer and Winter Sport. Winter sports are football, netball and t-ball and summer are cricket, bat tennis and softball. The students from year four to six also compete in athletics, swimming, cross country, basketball and soccer district carnivals.
Song Room:

With the support of the staff from Creative Melody students write, record and produce their own song. The process begins with the students forming small groups and creating a band name. They then use Inquiry Based Learning as a lense to brainstorm ideas for their song. Having listened to and explored various styles and genres of music, as well as poetry, the students put pen to paper and create lyrics. The Creative Melody staff then introduce musical theory and the students begin to explore chords on keyboard and guitar. They use this to compose music to accompany their lyrics. The final stage of the process is to record and edit their song using the program Garage Band. Students are then given the opportunity to perform their completed songs for the school community.

Performing Arts:

In Performing Arts students will learn about dance, drama and music throughout the year. Students develop their creativity through a range of activities and experiences. They work together to improve their coordination, rhythm and singing and acting abilities. Students explore the art of telling stories through acting and movement. They work together to develop trust, cooperation, improvisation and decision making. Students are encouraged to think creatively and work as a team as they participate in drama and movement activities.
**VISUAL ARTS**

In Visual Arts we are using the medium of paper predominantly this term. Children are learning, developing and refining their skills using scissors and paper. They are creating art pieces which are 2 dimensional, such as mosaics and scenes and have been learning how to cut and fold paper to create pieces 3 dimensional. We have used picture books such as ‘Snap! Went Chester’ by Tania Cox and David Miller, to illustrate the skills being learnt. Below are pictures of the mosaic art pieces the children completed. In later terms we will explore different media such as paint, modelling clay and construction materials.

![Mosaic Art Pieces](image)

**ELECTIVES**

In years 3, 4, 5 and 6 students take part in weekly electives sessions. They focus on one area per term. These include: Science, ICT, Visual Arts and Community Engagement. At the conclusion of the year the students would have dedicated a term engaged in learning in each of these areas.

**Science:**

In Science, students explore the four strands including Biological Sciences, Chemical Sciences, Earth and Space Sciences and Physical Sciences. They explore these concepts through viewing content and clips, questioning and predicting, researching and collecting information, and observing and conducting experiments.
- Biological Science: the understanding of all living things and how they have evolved over time. Students investigate animals, plants and microorganisms exploring their life cycles, body systems, structural adaptations and behaviours.
- Chemical Science: students explore and classify substances based on their properties such as solids, liquids and gases. They explore the physical changes of state and investigate how chemical reactions result in new substances.
- Earth and Space Science: students explore the Earth’s dynamic structure and how it is subject to change within and on its surface. They view the Earth as part of the solar system and explore how changes on Earth, such as day and night and the seasons relate to the Earth’s rotation and orbit around the sun.
- Physical Science: understanding the nature of forces and motion, and matter and energy. Students explore how forces affect the behaviour of objects and that energy can be transferred and transformed from one object to another.

**ICT:**

Information and Communications Technology allows students to interact with tools and digital spaces that can enhance their learning opportunities. All students have access to ACER tablets, desktop computers and interactive whiteboards. Chromebooks are also available for students in years 3-6. Through the use of online spaces such as blogs and Google Apps for Education (GAFE) students are engaging in collaborative learning that allows them to connect with their global community. They also learn to engage positively and safely in the online world.
Visual Arts:

Interpreting, responding, performing, presenting, ideas, skills, techniques, processes, context, aesthetics and criticism – are integral to Exploring and responding draws on students’ experiences as creators, makers, performers and/or audience.

Creating and making

The Creating and making dimension focuses on ideas, skills, techniques, processes, performances and presentations. It includes engagement in concepts that emerge from a range of starting points and stimuli. Students explore experiences, ideas, feelings and understandings through making, interpreting, performing, creating and presenting. Creating and making arts works involves imagination and experimentation; planning; the application of arts elements, principles and/or conventions; skills, techniques and processes; media, materials, equipment and technologies; reflection; and refinement. Individually and collaboratively, students explore their own works and works by other artists working in different historic and cultural contexts.

Exploring and responding

The Exploring and responding dimension focuses on context, interpreting and responding, criticism and aesthetics. It involves students analysing and developing understanding about their own and other people’s work and expressing personal and informed judgments of arts works. Involvement in evaluating meaning, ideas and/or content in finished products is integral to engagement in the Arts.

Community Engagement:

The focus of this elective is based on the *Physical, Personal and Social Learning* domain of ‘Civics and Citizenship. Students investigate how, in a democratic tradition, informed and diverse contributions and participation by citizens are important. They learn about, contest and enact the values that are important to be an engaged citizen within a community. Students are engaged in working on projects with kindergarten students at East Ivanhoe Preschool. They plan for sessions and evaluate the effectiveness of projects, analysing the effectiveness of the role they played as a citizen.

EXTRA CURRICULAR LEARNING

At Mother of God students have the option of being part of chess club and music lessons. These occur during the school day and enrolment by parents is required.
Chess Club:

Jim Cannon a professional chess coach visits Mother of God each Thursday afternoon during recess. An enthusiastic group of students join Jim for Chess Club where they learn, ponder and have fun as they are together engaged in the game of Chess. Jim says: “Chess is all about deduction, reasoning, strategic analysis, concentration, spatial awareness, logic, social interaction and so much more. But most of all, it’s fun!”

Music Lessons:

Creative Melody provides an in school instrumental music program for students who attend Mother of God Primary School. Individual and group lessons are offered providing a program that meets individual student needs at the introductory and advanced levels. The team at Creative Melody are a team of experienced music teachers who offer high quality and affordable music lessons in an enjoyable and fun-learning environment. Students who are enrolled at Creative Melody have the opportunity to perform in front of the whole school at the end of each semester where we as a school can acknowledge and celebrate their achievements and talent.
FIRE (Friends Igniting Reconciliation through Education) Carrier

Our FIRE Carrier leaders help us to acknowledge and recognise the special place and culture of the Indigenous peoples of Australia. We acknowledge that the Aboriginal people have been the caretakers of this land for more than 60,000 years. We respect their spiritual connection to the land.

At Mother of God four Year 5 students are commissioned to be FIRE Carriers each year. They support our FIRE Carrier teachers and the school community in recognising and developing our understandings and knowledge of the Aboriginal people their stories, their history and culture and traditions.

They also are part of the larger network of FIRE Carrier students within the North East Zone and are supported by staff from the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry.