



Information Handout 2023

Foundation

At Vermont Primary School we aim to be nut free.

Please ensure that all food coming to school is free of nuts.

Foundation Teachers:

Nikki Lewis (Team Leader), Bec Mealings (Transition Leader), Courtney Williams, Damon Webb, Nic Walsh and Fiona Hedstrom.

Responsibilities:

- Students are required to be punctual and arrive before 8.55am. We would like to encourage parents to develop the children's independence by saying their goodbyes and sending them to the line-up.
- In the morning, the Foundation students follow a routine to independently enter the classroom. This includes carrying their own school bag, hanging it up and getting the items out that are required for the day e.g. blue take home folder, hat and drink bottle.
- It is our aim to encourage the students to be responsible for their learning. Please ask the children what they need to bring to school each day. Ensure they help you pack their bag so they are aware what is in it.
- If a child arrives after 9am, parents are to sign in their children in through the office and sign them out if they leave early. It is also important that students are picked up very soon after dismissal.
- Children are taught various strategies to learn to deal with problems that may arise from time to time. Foundation is a great place to learn social skills and how to negotiate with peers. We encourage children to be responsible for their actions and understand how they impact others. If you have any issues please clarify them first with your child's teacher.

Communication:

- Blue Folders:
 - o We are asking parents to please check the blue folders daily for notices from the school or written notes from the teacher. All notices that are to be returned will be sent home on pink paper. It would be appreciated if all notices could be returned as soon as possible. Whilst most permissions are accessed and actioned via Qkr, there are documents such as Internet Agreements where a prompt response is required. Please make sure you put your child's Grade on each notice (e.g. ODW – Mr Webb, OCW – Miss Williams, OBM – Miss Mealings, ONL – Mrs Lewis).
 - o The Blue Folders and take-home readers must come to school every. Even if readers have not been finished it is important they come to school as they are used during school time.

o Communication notices are sent home quite frequently at the beginning of the year, and will also feature in The Nurlendi News which is a fortnightly newsletter for the whole school. Emails will be forwarded to you that contain any reminders, notices and upcoming school events.

o If your child is absent, we require this to be updated in Sentral. Please see your child's teacher if you are having problems logging in.

o If there is something you wish to discuss with your child's teacher, please email to arrange a time that is suitable. We will reply to your email in a reasonable time within working hours.

o If you are not receiving any updates via email, please ensure that the school office has your correct email address. Additional important information can be located on the School Website <http://www.vermontps.vic.edu.au> If there are any extra pamphlets that need to go out, they will be given to the oldest child at the school to take home in their blue folder.

• Lunch and Snack Times

o Please ensure your child has a packed lunch and a small playlunch consisting of healthy choices such as fruit or vegetables. We encourage the children to have a drink bottle filled with water on their desk. The children eat their snack and lunch inside the classroom. We recommend that a spare set of plastic cutlery be placed in your child's bag just in case there is none in their lunchbox.

o Please ensure there are NO Nut Products included in your child's snacks or lunch. It is important that you inform any family members that may prepare their snack and lunch. Your child's classroom teacher will inform you if there are any additional allergies to be aware of.

o Continue to talk to your child about what they would like to include in their lunchboxes and pack enough to give them energy throughout the day.

o We have two lunch order options available throughout the week. Classroom Cuisine is available on Wednesdays and Subway on Fridays, both via the Qkr app.

• First Aid and Playground Information:

o There is a Hot Day Timetable and a Wet Day Timetable. The children will play inside their classrooms if it is too hot or too wet at lunchtime or at recess.

o Out in the playground the teachers wear bright orange vests and carry red yard duty bags which hold the basics for minor scrapes or grazes. If anything requires further attention they will be sent to the school sick bay area. Please wash grazes and replace the band aids at home to keep the wound clean.

o If your child goes to the sick bay for any injury, they will receive a white notice which will have all the details of the injury noted. This white notice will be placed in their Blue Folder to take home so you are aware of what has occurred. If there are serious injuries you will be contacted. All staff are First Aid trained. The majority of them are Level 2.

o We are encouraging the children to continue to develop COVID safe practises at school, such as washing hands and using hand sanitiser frequently. For more information, please access the DHHS website: <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/how-stay-safe-and-well-covid-19>

- Some of the symptoms of COVID include: - fever, chills, sweats, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, runny nose, loss or change in sense of smell or taste, headache, muscle soreness, stuffy nose, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea.
- If your child or a close family member has symptoms, seek advice and get tested.
- If your child demonstrates symptoms of gastroenteritis, such as vomiting or diarrhoea, we ask that your child **not return to school until 48 hours after the last symptom has occurred**. This is done to prevent the spread of this highly infectious virus.

Uniforms:

o Please label all your child's belongings. This includes smaller items such as hats, head bands, lunchboxes, jackets, jumpers and drink bottles. This will ensure that we can return them to the rightful owners. Please ensure they do not wear dangly earrings, long necklaces or bracelets as it could be a safety concern. Uniform items such as the School Bag, Polo shirt, Long-sleeved shirt, jumpers, jackets and hats must have a Vermont Primary School logo.

o Leggings must not be worn under either the winter or summer uniform.

o The classrooms are heated in winter and there is no need for children to have extra t-shirts or long sleeve shirts under their uniform. They get too hot in the classroom and when running around outside. Please provide them with an extra school jacket to take outside if necessary, rather than extra layers under their uniform.

o Whilst there is an area for lost property, your child's uniform will only be returned if it is clearly named. This may take a few days, please be patient with this process.

o A reminder to all that head bands and hair ties are to be navy blue as they form part of the school uniform. Shoulder length hair needs to be tied up. This is for your child's safety and to prevent the spread of head lice.

o Children must wear proper fitting runners to school so that they can walk up and down the stairs, participate in sporting activities and play on the playground equipment safely. NO school shoes should be worn.

o Please send along a spare set of clearly labelled underwear and shorts just in case there are little accidents.

• Additional Programs available at the school:

o The Footsteps Program (in Term 4) is a physical education program that all children participate in. It is an opportunity to experience something different and develop their gross motor skills.

• Class Parent Scheme:

o Each Foundation class has a class parent who will work with the classroom teacher to organise reading rosters and assistance for excursions when required. If the teachers do not have a Class Parent, a form will be sent out in Term 1 asking for volunteers to fulfil this role.

o Anyone who would like to come into the classroom to assist the children requires a 'Working with Children Card'. This is a requirement for any activity in or outside the school, such as assistance with Digitech lessons, Classroom Reading or excursions. You can apply for this online and when you receive it, you will need to advise the school office straight away.

- **Upcoming Events and Reminders:**

- o Please ensure that you contact your classroom teacher if you cannot attend your allocated interview time for your child's 'Wednesday Numeracy Assessment' time.

- o The Parents and Literacy Sessions dates will be sent out to the community shortly. This is a great way to help your child and also a requirement if you would like to assist in your child's classroom.

Literacy at Vermont Primary School

READING (Victorian Curriculum refers to this as Reading and Viewing)

- **At the beginning of the year, we focus on the Read Write Inc phonics program.**

The letter sounds are introduced and cued articulation is incorporated. We build on their existing knowledge with activities that also assist with writing formation and fine motor skills.

- o 'Cued articulation' is a set of hand cues introduced by Jane Passy. It is a physical representation of the body processes involved with a particular sound. It assists with the motor planning.

- o In Term 2, the students will complete activities targeted at their Individual Learning Goals, therefore, not all students complete the same activities during the week.

- **Home readers are a very important partnership between home and school.**

- o We have updated our home reading structure for 2023. Looking at best practice and research, the Foundation teachers have altered how Home Reading works. Below is a short overview of our program in Foundation. More information will be shared throughout the year and by attending our Parents and Literacy evenings.

- o **Term 1 :** Students will take home 2 books per week. These books are to share with the family and to create a routine and build an enjoyment of reading. Foundation students are not expected to read these books themselves.
 - o We encourage you to talk about the books – what happened?, what was the best part? etc. – to help build comprehension, vocabulary and student enjoyment of books.
 - o After we have learnt more sounds, students will also bring home 2 Sound Blending Books per week. These books are for students to practice 'Fred Talking' words (sounding out and blending together). Even if your child can read the words, we encourage them to practice the sounding out strategy. Books for enjoyment will still be brought home.
 - o **Term 2:** Once we have learnt and are more confident in our sound knowledge, students will bring home decodable readers. They will read 2 books per week.
 - o These books have words that students can 'Fred Talk' or decode and some 'Red Words' (common or tricky words). The first night, students should just read the book through and sound out unknown words. For 'Red Words', if students don't know the word – tell them! These words are tricky and don't follow sound patterns we know.

- The second night, students will reread the same book. Then there are questions at the back of the book for you to ask. Students can find the answers in the book or have a think and use the clues. Students can also use the pictures to practice retelling the story.
- We still encourage you to read and share other picture books for fun.
- **Term 3 and 4:** Once students are confident in their sounds and we have taught them lots of 'Red Words', students will begin moving to the PM Home Readers. These are the books we currently use throughout the school.
- To change levels, we will do a reading assessment where your child will read a more difficult book twice a term to check their reading and comprehension. Together with your child, we will develop a reading strategy for them to practise at home with you and write this in their reader folder.
- The children will change these books daily and bring their new book home to read to you. This should be quite an easy book so that they can develop the love of reading for entertainment and enjoy reading to you at home.
- At Vermont Primary School there is high parental involvement in supporting our reading program. When we are able, Class parents organise rosters for parents to listen to children read daily, as well as parents hearing their children read at home. This team work with the school contributes to the high levels of achievement in Literacy.

● **It is important for you to hear your child read each day.**

○ As the books get more involved during the year, you will be able to encourage and remind your child to use a range of skills. These skills will be discussed at our Parents and Literacy Nights. They will include word attack skills i.e. using the picture, looking at the sounds they know, using 'Fred Talk' as a strategy to sound out words, breaking the words into syllables and reading on for meaning.

○ Fluency is an important skill that you can model.

○ Finally discuss the book with your child – ask questions that are literal (i.e. that can be found on the lines in the book) and inferential (not written in the book – between the lines) for example, who, what, where, when and why questions.

○ However, most important of all is to make these reading sessions fun, an enjoyable experience. If it becomes onerous or an ordeal in any way – abandon that session. Good readers are people who love reading.

WRITING at Vermont Primary School

● **Letter formation is the main focus at the start of the year.**

- We focus on a new letter each day, their starting points, writing posture and pencil grip.
- Recounts, narratives and procedural are some of the genres that are covered in whole class, modelled or shared writing.

● **We use a mixture of the early years approach with writing and whole group focus.**

- The teacher will sit with one group and really focus and guide the children as they work.
- Other children will be completing their work independently.
- The whole class come back together at the end to share their work.

- **The lessons start with an introductory activity aimed at improving writing skills**

- A variety of resources are used to introduce a skill e.g. videos, games and books. Skills such as using capital letters, learning about using nouns and adjectives in their writing are developed over time.
- At the end of the session, children are asked to reread their work and later in the year are encouraged to edit it
- Editing will include looking to see if they have included a capital letter and full stop at the beginning and ending of sentences.

Information Communication Technology (ICT) and Writing

The students have the opportunity to learn how to use a variety of programs to present their writing.

- This will be during their Digitech specialist time and within the class using the resources we have available.
- They will also be exposed to various modes of texts that include sound and movement.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING at Vermont Primary School

Children practise their speaking to the class once a week through Show and Tell and during sharing time.

- We encourage parents to ensure that their child brings an item on their Show and Tell day. Topics are listed in the weekly Level Newsletter. Sometimes it is good to practise at home.
- There is also a focus during reading – the ability to retell what they have read and answer questions.
- Speaking and Listening focuses on general communication skills such as turn taking, listening, questioning, eye contact, fluency, expression, body language and changing the way we speak depending on who we are speaking to.

MATHEMATICS at Vermont Primary School

The Victorian Curriculum Strands for Mathematics in the Foundation Year are:

- Number and Algebra – Number and Place Value, Patterns and Algebra
- Measurement and Geometry – Units of Measurement, Shape, Location and Transformation
- Statistics and Probability – Data Representation and Interpretation

At Vermont we are aware of the diversity of learners and the children arrive at school with a range of abilities.

Assessments are a major focus in Term One to assist us with identifying each child's learning needs.

- A range of activities that cover the introduction of numbers, open ended activities and involve additional skills such as fine motor skills and problem-solving strategies are introduced.
- As all students learn in different ways, the consideration is given to strengths, weaknesses and different learning styles.

- In Term One, the Foundation students have 6 lessons of Mathematics a week, with a focus that will run for a fortnight. This involves working with a teacher, doing hands on activities, playing maths games and completing book work.
- From Term Two, there will be 3 Maths lessons that will take place in targeted learning groups. All students within the level will be placed in a Maths group so that their learning can be targeted and extended more efficiently. Each teacher in the level will be assigned to one group that they will be teaching for the semester. The 2 classroom maths lessons will take place in their grades with their class teacher. The teachers will continue to work closely together to ensure each student's needs are met.
- Each student at Vermont Primary School will have a Mathletics account. This will further the use of Learning Technologies into the Mathematics curriculum in the classroom. We encourage students to also use this at home to support the learning they are doing throughout the week.

INQUIRY at Vermont Primary School

- Our Inquiry units have been developed to meet our 'Whole School' focus of: HOW CAN I PROTECT MY FUTURE? The four units planned in our Foundation Level ensure we meet the needs of the students and the Australian Curriculum. The Learning areas of History and Science are incorporated. We also integrate Literacy and Numeracy where possible.
 - This year our Inquiry Units include:
 1. Creating a Learning Community - This consists of learning about learning.
 - What do they know about learning?
 - Identifying what is a learner
 - Working out how they learn best.

This is the opportunity to teach the children the basics of school life, the rules and requirements of the classroom.
 2. What's My Story? - This has a History focus and looks at who THEY are, their FAMILY and the WORLD they fit in.
 3. Toys - This has more of a science focus on materials and movement such as pushing, pulling and levers.
 4. Living Things: - This unit has a major science focus and looks at what living things need to survive (food, water, shelter and oxygen).

Some of these units will involve incursions and excursions. Details and notices on Qkr will be provided.

SCIENCE at Vermont Primary School

- The topics covered this year in level 1 will be:
 - Physical Sciences – Toys (moving objects)
 - Earth and Space Sciences – Seasonal Changes
 - Biological Sciences – Living Things
 - Chemical Sciences – Mixing and making

The Resilience Project at Vermont Primary School

- VPS follows The Resilience Project from F-6 as part of our engagement and well-being program to develop increased engagement and improved mental health. Students will be participating in activities that research has shown will build resilience and happiness.
- Lessons in the curriculum focus on four key strategies:
 - GRATITUDE: Appreciating what you have, not focussing on what you don't have.
 - EMPATHY: Thinking of the needs of others/kindness.
 - MINDFULNESS: The ability to be calm, present and choosing what you focus on.
 - EMOTIONAL LITERACY: The ability to label out emotions as we are experiencing them.
- In Foundation, the students will be participating in lessons using the Student Book and some hands-on activities. We aim to reinforce these ideas through using the terminology and modelling this behaviour in the classroom.

Resilience Rights and Respectful Relationships at Vermont Primary School

- VPS follows the Resilience Rights and Respectful Relationships from F-6 in addition to 'The Resilience Project' as a part of our engagement and well-being program. This program has been designed to develop students' social, emotional and positive relationship skills.
- Foundation lessons focus on identifying emotions, identifying personal strengths, understanding that everyone can be strong and gentle, fair and friendly play, positive gender relations and sharing the play space and equipment.

Better Buddies at Vermont Primary School

- Foundation students will work with Grade 6 students to assist with their transition into primary school.
- The Grade 6 students model how they are positive role models in the classroom and playground.
- Both the Foundation and Grade 6 students in previous years have developed and demonstrated greater skills with empathy, self-confidence, responsibility and positive social values.
- Throughout the year, Foundation and Grade 6 students get together to share classroom and outdoor activities to build relationships.

If you have any queries regarding this information provided in Term One, please submit questions to the Team Leader of this level (via email or your child's teacher). Alternatively, you can ask your questions at the Parent Teacher Interviews. Dates and further details of the Interviews will be provided during the Term.

We are looking forward to a terrific year of Teaching and Learning.

Nikki Lewis, Bec Mealings, Courtney Williams, Damon Webb, Nic Walsh and Fiona Hedstrom

Please read on for information about the Specialist Program delivered to our Foundation Program at Vermont Primary School.



Specialist Information

Foundation

Physical Education

Specialist Teacher: Mr Clinton Walsh

Physical Education Curriculum Overview

Vermont Primary School believes that Physical Education should play an integral part in the school curriculum and provide an opportunity for students to develop their physical health and wellbeing. Physical Education seeks to promote lifelong involvement in physical activity and to promote healthy lifestyles among students.

The Foundation Year curriculum provides the basis for developing knowledge, understanding and skills for students to lead healthy, safe and active lives. The content gives students opportunities to learn about their strengths and simple actions they can take to keep themselves and their classmates healthy and safe. The curriculum also enables students to develop and practice fundamental movement skills through active play and structured movement activities.

Components of the Vermont Primary School Foundation Physical Education Program include:

- Fundamental Motor Skills development: Ball bouncing, catching, kicking, throwing, striking & dodging.
- Perceptual Motor Program
- Gymnastics
- Dance
- Modified games 2.

The Physical Education Program aims to:

- Provide equal opportunities in sport for all children.
- Ensure that as many children as possible are involved in sport.
- Provide an environment that encourages maximum participation.
- Encourage children to work as part of a team.
- Teach children the benefits of sport and keeping healthy, and
- Provide positive experiences that will lead to lifelong participation in physical activity.

Parent Assistance

Many aspects of the Physical Education program require the assistance of parent helpers. Programs and events such as the Perceptual Motor Program and the Junior School Tabloid Sports Carnival would not be possible without the support of parents. Your support and assistance is greatly appreciated.

Working with Children Card

Parents wishing to assist with the programs outlined above will require a current Working with Children Card. For further details on how to apply for a Working with Children Card please contact the school office.

Helpful Information

Students are encouraged to bring a drink bottle to Physical Education.

Students are required to wear non-marking runners in the school stadium.

Please inform me of any medical or health related issues that may impact your child's ability to participate in Physical Education.

Digital Technologies

Specialist Teacher: Mrs Peta Jenkin

Students in Foundation have a 40-minute dedicated session in the Digitech lab each week. Digital Technologies will be closely linked to the Inquiry topic for each term as well as being integrated with the Literacy and Numeracy program.

With their own individual computer in the lab, they start with using various web-based sites to identify the different uses of computers, name the basic components of a computer, develop their mouse skills, open and close and minimise windows and log on and off the school network.

Foundation students learn the safe use of ICT tools, the correct way to sit at the computer and how to appropriately handle equipment. They become familiar with the computer desktop. By using programs, such as Paint, 2DoltYourself, Word and Coding, they develop the necessary skills to plan and present their work in a digital manner.

Digital Technologies places a greater emphasis on computational thinking (problem solving) and algorithms (a sequence of steps for carrying out instructions). To this end, the students will also be involved in game making and basic programming using 2DoltYourself and Code.org. They will go through the process of defining, designing, implementing and evaluating their products at a Foundation Level.

As with all other Levels across the school, the use of iPads and other technological resources is extensive in Foundation, where these ICT devices are used to enhance and enrich student learning and provide students with exciting, hands-on, tactile ICT learning experiences.

Performing Arts

Specialist Teacher: Mr Travis Fraser (Team Leader) and Michelle Guye

The main objective of the Performing Arts program in Foundation is participation to build confidence.

The curriculum will cover the following aspects:

- Basic rhythm patterns which they will learn to count, repeat and perform.

- A variety of percussion instruments as well as tuned percussion instruments will be used to explore sounds, accompany storytelling and play along to a beat or rhythm
- Students will learn about key musical elements such as beat, rhythm, pitch, dynamics and tempo
- Basic dance moves and simple role playing.

Each year the school hosts three Soiree Concerts highlighting the musical talent of our students. There is a Junior Soiree (Foundation-Yr2 students) which is usually held in Term 2 and a Middle Soiree (Year 3 and 4 students) and a Senior Soiree (Yr5 and 6 students) which is usually held in Term 3. These concerts will feature music groups such as the Choir, Orchestra and Rock Band, as well as various solo and small group performances. The school will release more information concerning these events to the school community once all the details are finalized.

Visual Arts

Specialist Teacher: Mrs Chris Mulvany

Students attend a forty-minute Visual Arts Lesson in the Art Room each week. They need to wear their own smock to protect their uniform when working in the art room. There are NO spare smocks to share. Each child is responsible for their own smock, so please clearly label the smock. Everyone will participate in the same activity and there will not be an alternate activity for children without a smock. The best smocks have long sleeves, are easy to get on and off with elastic or Velcro, are long and cover the thigh and are made of thick fabric (plastic tears easily and paint just slides onto shoes).

In Foundation the Visual Arts program has an emphasis on the safe exploration of a wide variety of materials and tools and the introduction of Visual Art elements and principles. Students also share thoughts about their own work. The role of Visual Arts Specialist is again being shared between Mrs. Mulvany, who works Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays and Mrs Simpson who works Wednesdays and Fridays. Foundation classes are on Thursday so Mrs Mulvany will be their ART Teacher this year.

INDONESIAN

Specialist Teacher: Mrs Yvonne Smith (Bu Smith)

Selamat datang - Welcome to our new students who are learning Indonesian for the first time. Students undertaking Indonesian lessons will begin to acquire the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing through a wide range of communicative activities and authentic sources. This will enable our students to not only learn about the language but also to develop an intercultural understanding and foster global communication which in turn develops greater tolerance and appreciation of others.

Learning a language fosters students' ability to think and reflect, develop mental flexibility and problem-solving strategies. It offers students the opportunity and the ability to develop interpersonal skills and to practise higher order thinking skills in a meaningful context.

Students from Foundation through to Year 6 attend one 40-minute lesson of Indonesian each week. Students begin to use and respond to the language of Indonesian in the classroom, relating the language to what they see, hear and touch, and to topics related to self, home, family and other classroom activities. Through greetings, songs, stories and games, students become familiar with the sounds of the language and clusters of words, and practise using the language. From the beginning, they hear words, phrases and basic sentences in use. Students are introduced to concrete language with repetitive patterns, and develop strategies for memorisation and comprehension.

Students are immersed in hearing the language and will be encouraged to participate in gestures, role play, singing, rhymes, activities, conversing (for example, repeating teacher models, asking and answering scaffolded questions and identifying objects and pictures related to stories, songs, visual and other stimulus materials. Hearing the language in real communication contexts, in extended but simple stretches will enable the students to gradually use it themselves.

