

Early Childhood Education Policy

Rationale

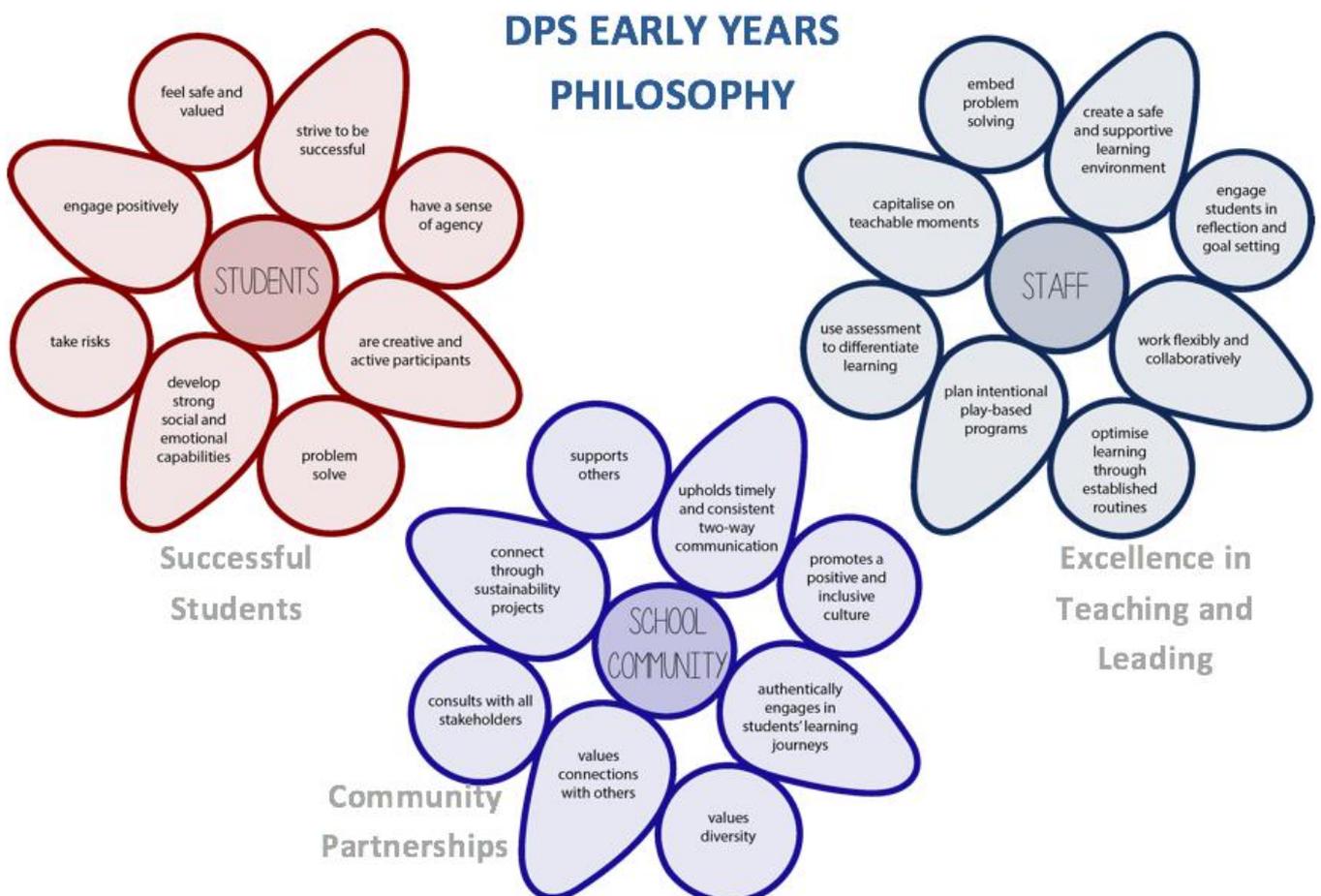
At Dalkeith Primary School, we believe that the early years of education, Kindergarten to Year Two, lay an essential foundation to build successful life-long learners and positive, contributing members of society. Every student has the right to learn in a developmentally appropriate environment, to feel a sense of belonging and to be provided with the opportunities needed for them to achieve success in all areas of their development. Parents, caregivers and community members are considered partners in the education of young children.

Dalkeith Primary School Mission Statement

Strive for excellence
Respect and value others
Inspire creativity and innovation
Empower global citizenship

Together we shape the future

Philosophy



Philosophy Process

The Early Years Philosophy for DPS represents the combined beliefs of staff, students and the community. It was developed in consultation and collaboration with staff, students and the community. Stakeholders

contributed their beliefs about best practice in early years education; these belief statements were then collated and combined to ensure that all parties viewpoints were regarded.

General Capabilities

General Capabilities are embedded and integrated in a meaningful and authentic way across all learning areas and year levels. Refer to <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities>

Curriculum

Teaching staff plan collaboratively in like year level teams to ensure consistency of content, pedagogy and assessment practices. Teachers ensure rigour of content by consistently referring to the relevant department documents:

Approved Learning Frameworks for The Early Years of Schooling

Kindergarten	Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) Kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines
Pre-primary	EYLF West Australian Curriculum (WAC) Foundation
Year One	EYLF WAC Year One
Year Two	EYLF WAC Year Two

Note: Refer to the 'EYLF Outline for DPS' for examples of how each year level strives to meet the five broad outcomes of the EYLF.

Pedagogy

Teachers utilise the Instructional Framework as their lesson design model (see appendix 1).

Our beliefs

Create a safe and supportive learning environment

- Optimise learning through predictable established routines ie. daily calendar, counting, greetings in languages other than English, transition routines, songs and games
- Students feel safe and valued when teachers personally greet each student upon arrival each day, they support them through conflict resolution and help build emotional resilience
- Teachers utilise the environment as the third teacher. Classroom and outdoor learning environments are intentionally planned to maximise learning opportunities
- Teachers strive to provide a flexible indoor/outdoor learning environment

Plan intentional play-based programs

- Teachers plan intentional play-based programs for all learning areas with a focus on hands on, experience based learning
- Students are provided with a range of opportunities to practice an outcome, therefore catering to students with different learning styles ie. kinaesthetic learners (dance, movement, ball games), visual learners (viewing, pictures, observing others performing tasks), tactile learners (LEGO, playdough, playfoam, construction)
- Teachers intentionally plan nature play opportunities integrating this into a variety of learning areas

Support students to develop strong social and emotional capabilities

- Staff intentionally teach the school wide Positive Behaviour Support values of 'Respect, Responsibility and Resilience'
- Students are encouraged to take risks in their academic pursuits, in the outdoor learning environment (ie. obstacle courses), through nature play and in social situations

Provide students with a sense of agency

- Students are given opportunities to guide their learning through access to intentional play-based learning areas in Kindergarten and Pre-primary classrooms. Planning and implementation for these learning areas is guided by student interests and lines of inquiry ie. changing the home corner regularly to be reflective of student interests/cultural backgrounds, interest tables and themes for construction areas
- Student centred learning is maximised when teachers capitalise on 'teachable moments'
- Some junior primary classrooms have been transformed into flexible learning spaces allowing the students agency to choose where, who and how they work in the classroom

Parents, caregivers and the school community are valued educators

- Staff value diversity and promote a positive and inclusive classroom culture by acknowledging and planning for culturally appropriate learning opportunities. In consultation with families, significant cultural celebrations are respectfully acknowledged in each classroom
- Teachers strive to uphold timely and consistent two-way communication with parents and caregivers through regularly updated classroom noticeboards, email, file boxes, class newsletters or through Seesaw
- Teachers authentically engage the school community in students' learning journeys through parent help rosters, Mothers Day, Fathers Day and Grandparents Day celebrations and cultural celebrations. Teachers invite other suggestions for program participation from families
- DPS celebrates NAIDOC Day/Harmony Day/HooRRRah Day every three years

STEM and Digital Technologies

- STEM and Digital Technologies are taught in an integrated approach across all curriculum learning areas
- Teachers use the DPS design wheel for STEM projects to lead their students through an inquiry process
- Each class has a bank of iPads that stay in the classroom for their use. iPads are used to consolidate, reflect, enhance and share the students learning across the curriculum using the SAMR model; Substitution, Augmentation, Modification and Redefinition. Wherever possible, iPads should be used beyond the Substitution and Augmentation stages
 - Kindergarten – year 2 devices: Ratio of 1:2 school leased iPads per student
 - *If more devices are required, teachers can timetable to share with another class*
- The MacBook Air trolleys are available for use from the library for the PP-2 students. They are used across the curriculum and in accordance with digital technology curriculum requirements

Assessment

Teachers use both formal and informal assessment *for*, *as* and *of* learning as baseline data to guide teaching programs, to measure student achievement and to differentiate learning. Assessments are fair, purposeful, educative and lead to informative reporting. Information gained from assessment is used to differentiate the content, processes and products of teaching and learning programs. Assessments take a myriad of forms, including observations and anecdotal records of children's play and social interactions.

Teachers moderate work samples with like year level colleagues to ensure consistent and accurate judgments of student achievement are made.

Refer to the Assessment Schedule for a comprehensive overview of the assessment required in each year level (see appendix 2).

Assessment Specific to Early Childhood

Kindergarten	Diana Rigg Pre-Literacy Screen, Kindergarten Assessment Tool (KAT)
Pre-primary	On-entry Assessment – Module 1 (Term One, all students)
Year One	On-entry Assessment – Module 2 (Term One, SAER only)
Year Two	On-entry Assessment – Module 3 (Term One, SAER only)

Reporting

- Parent-Teacher interviews are held at the end of Term 1 for all classes. Parents nominate a ten minute time slot, during which time social-emotional, academic and behavioural progress is shared and discussed with the family.
- Further parent interviews are arranged by either the teacher or at parent request as the need arises throughout the year. Teachers arrange regular meetings to discuss IEP's and BMP's.
- Formal semester reports are distributed at the end of Term 2 and Term 4.

On-entry Assessment

On-entry Assessment data is rigorously examined and dissected by PP staff at the end of Term 1 each year. The data is used to inform planning for the PP cohort as well as to generate GEP's and IEP's. On-entry achievement is also shared with the Kindergarten teachers to inform their planning and ensure students are best prepared for their first compulsory year of schooling. During the Term 4 School Development days when NAPLAN and whole school data is reviewed, the On-entry data is revisited and paired alongside PM Benchmark reading levels and Semester One grades to ensure consistent judgments are made and to further identify areas of need for individuals, groups and the cohort.

Keep Sake Folders

Keep Sake Folders contain a collection of work samples that are sent home to the family at the end of the year in Kindergarten and PP. They demonstrate a sample of the work that students have engaged in and completed throughout the year.

Seesaw

Seesaw is a digital sharing platform used to communicate student work samples, photographs, videos and achievements with caregivers. Both students and teachers can post using Seesaw. Teachers explicitly teach how to create appropriate posts and ensure that student posts are monitored. The digital sharing platform is an ideal way to bridge home-school communication and to inform families of the learning in the classroom.

National Quality Standards

All early childhood teachers at Dalkeith Primary School, strive to meet the seven Quality Areas (QAs) of the National Quality Standards to an exemplary standard. *"The National Quality Standards set a national benchmark for quality in education across Australia and establishes a set of standards that all services are expected to meet."* (Guide to the NQS, p7)

QA 1 - Educational Program and Practice

QA2 – Children's Health and Safety

QA3 – Physical Environment

QA4 – Staffing Arrangements

QA5 – Relationships with Children

QA6 – Community Partnerships

QA7 – Leadership and Service Management

Through the Dalkeith Professional Growth model and reflections against the NQS, staff consistently engage in professional dialogue to critically reflect on their philosophy, pedagogy and teaching programs. *“Reflective practice is a form of ongoing learning that involves engaging with questions of philosophy, ethics and practice. Its intention is to gather information and gain insights that support, inform and enrich decision-making about children’s learning.” (EYLF, p9)* As areas for improvement are identified, staff work collaboratively to make the relevant improvements. Quality Improvement Plans are developed for each Quality Area and reviewed regularly by the early years team and the Principal.