

# CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK POLICY

## Rationale

At Birrale PS, our curriculum covers all the arrangements that the school makes for student development and learning. It includes course content, student activities, teaching approaches, the way in which teachers and classes are organised, and decisions regarding facilities and resources.

Birrale PS encourages students to strive for excellence in all of their endeavours. To achieve this, the school provides sequential teaching and learning programs that deliver a comprehensive, broadly-based and culturally inclusive curricula.

## Aim

Each year, the school will map out its curricula in overall Scope and Sequence Plans for all learning areas. Each term, these plans are then disassembled into separated term-planning documents and then further detailed in weekly plans created within grade level teams.

Birrale PS will meet the minimum standard with:

1. A time allocation per each of the eight main learning areas (Section 2: Birrale PS Curriculum Outline).
2. An explanation of how our curriculum and teaching practices are reviewed is included in the section, *Program Evaluation & Review*.
3. An Outline of how the school will deliver its curricula is found in the Birrale PS Scope and Sequence charts for each year.
4. A whole school curriculum is available in the form of planning documents, but not included in the policy due to continuous updating and curriculum changes.
5. For a documented strategy to improve student learning outcomes, refer to the School Strategic Plan.

## Implementation

### Curriculum Guidelines

1. Birrale PS will recognise and respond to its community's diverse student needs when developing its curriculum programs and plans.
2. Birrale PS will comply with (Department of Education and Training) DET guidelines regarding the length of student instruction time required in Victorian schools.
3. There will be a broad offering of programs to meet demand, designed to enhance effective learning for the 21st century, e.g. strong literacy capabilities, sound numeracy capabilities, STEM, economics and extension in thinking and socialisation programs.
4. The DET places a high priority on the teaching of Physical and Sport Education, Languages and EAL. Our school also places a high priority on the teaching of these learning areas.

5. Teaching and learning programs will be resourced through Program Budgets.

## **1. Birralee PS Teaching and Learning Program**

### **Program Development**

- i. Birralee PS will provide a variety of programs that will address the specific needs of students in relation to gender, special learning needs, disabilities and impairments, students of high ability and talent, and students from language backgrounds other than English (EAL) to improve student outcomes.
- ii. In accordance with DET policy and Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) guidelines, the Victorian Curriculum (Vic Curric) will be used as a framework for curriculum development and delivery from Foundation to Year 6 (and above where necessary).
- iii. When developing its Curriculum Plan, the school will provide at least 25 hours student instruction per week.

### **Program Implementation**

- iv. The Birralee PS Leadership Team in conjunction with advice from relevant staff in the curriculum areas, will determine the program for the following year based on the Vic Curric standards, student learning requirements, and the need to maintain a balanced and broad provision of subjects.
- v. To facilitate this implementation planning documents, student assessment schedules and achievement data will be produced that reflect the alignment with Vic Curric standards.
- vi. DET requirements relating to the teaching of Languages, Physical and Sports Education, the and English as an Additional Language (EAL), will continue to be implemented.
- vii. The use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) will be integrated across the curriculum to support the improvement of teaching and learning outcomes, adhering to DET's School Policy & Advisory Guide 'Using Digital Technologies to Support Learning and Teaching' and the school's own endorsed policy.

### **Student Wellbeing and Learning**

Birralee PS will embed student wellbeing in all learning experiences by aligning student welfare and curriculum policies, and by creating an educational environment and curriculum that is inclusive and meaningful to all students. This will be fulfilled by the following;

- i. providing an integrated and comprehensive curriculum approach that incorporates the personal and social issues of students into their daily learning experiences
- ii. providing a flexible, relevant, inclusive and appropriate curriculum
- iii. accommodating student developmental needs within the Victorian Curriculum stages of schooling

### **Students with Disabilities**

The DET and Birralelee PS are committed to delivering an inclusive education system that ensures all students (including students with disabilities), have access to a quality education that meets their diverse needs.

Birralelee PS will liaise with DET to provide suitable programs and resources to support the delivery of high quality schooling for students with disabilities.

### **Koori Education**

Birralelee PS is committed to providing culturally appropriate and inclusive programs to Koori students through;

- i. working in partnership with the Koori community to develop an understanding of Koori culture and the interpersonal relationship with the Koori community, for example via Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups (LAECG)
- ii. supporting the development of high expectations and individualised learning for Koori students
- iii. creating an environment that respects, recognises and celebrates cultural identity through its practice and curriculum
- iv. Implementing initiatives and programs that meet student needs and in partnership with the Koori community.

### **Program Evaluation & Review**

- i. The Leadership Team will track whole-school data and trends and identify potential curriculum areas that require focus. Data analysed will include but is not limited to, NAPLAN results, each semester's student progress results (formal testing & teacher observation), Accelerated Reading progress and the Student Attitudes to School data (student voice).
- ii. During the Planning Week (at the end of Term 4), each grade levels team will review the learning program for their current year in preparation for adapting and improving the program for the following year so that this audit will inform future curriculum planning.
- iii. Each year the literacy and maths programs will be audited so that adherence to school expectations are reviewed, and to ensure that continuity and high standards are uniformly delivered in all grade areas.
- iv. Student learning outcome data will be;
  - o provided to DET
  - o reported in the *Annual Report to the School Community*
  - o available on the *State Register* maintained by the *Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority*
  - o available on the school website within the Annual Implementation Plan

## 2. Birralelee PS Curriculum Outline

The timetable at Birralelee PS has been adjusted according to the growth of the school. Currently lessons are 50 minutes long to cater for 24 classes. As the school continues to grow and the number of classes increase, the length of lessons and timetable will be adapted.

All lessons are adjusted (differentiated) for various student needs, including selected content, student grouping, learning expectations and achievements or resources needed.

Literacy	Time allowance: 2 sessions per day (100 minutes)
<p>Birralelee PS recognises that literacy competence is the foundation for <u>all</u> effective learning. The literacy curriculum includes the teaching of Reading, Writing and Speaking &amp; Listening.</p> <p>Teachers use classroom observations and assessment in order to identify student standards of learning and to monitor their progress.</p> <p>Where possible, literacy lessons are completed during the morning when students are more alert and learning is optimal. Extra to this designated time, students are expected to read for at least 20 minutes every day in class and at home.</p> <p>The Spalding Language Arts Program: At Birralelee PS, a common literacy teaching program used from Foundation to Year 6. The main features of the Spalding program are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This program is a direct, explicit, multisensory, phonetic language learning program</li> <li>- The whole-school use of this program means that the level and expectation of literacy learning is high, sequential and rigorous throughout all grade levels.</li> <li>- Students are familiar with the learned common meta-language relating to the learning of English</li> <li>- All new classroom teachers participate in Spalding training as a condition to working at Birralelee PS.</li> <li>- Staff selection at interview is specific in appointing teachers with high levels of language ability</li> <li>- Teachers are expected to attend a refresher course after 2 or 3 years, as well as ongoing professional development learning sessions and peer support mentoring sessions</li> <li>- An annual audit is carried out in order to self-assess and regulate the common adherence to the high standards of the program</li> </ul>	
EAL	
<p>Students may be identified as English as Alternative Language speakers (i.e. EAL) who have been born overseas or who have been born in Australia, but have EAL parents. Both categories of student may need extra support in learning correct, academic standard English.</p> <p>Some students identified as EAL and who have no or few English language skills, will be supported by a dedicated EAL teacher. This teacher assesses a student's individual English language skills on enrolment and if necessary, places them within ability and age-appropriate groups, to receive regular support time (generally 4 – 5 students per class), once or twice a week or as needed.</p> <p>Resources and support are readily available for all classroom teachers to help EAL students, whether they qualify for the withdrawal support classes or not, within the standard classroom.</p> <p>Students identified as EAL students will be assessed using the EAL continuum/ABLES unless consistently demonstrating that they are at the average expected level in the Victorian Curriculum over a significant time period.</p>	

Maths	Time allowance: 1 session per day (50 minutes)
<p>The three strands of mathematical learning described by the Victorian Curriculum are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Number &amp; Algebra</li> <li>○ Measurement &amp; Geometry</li> <li>○ Statistics &amp; Probability</li> </ul> <p>All students need to demonstrate their understanding of numerical and mathematical concepts in order to progress successfully.</p> <p>At Birrale PS, we acknowledge that the basis of mathematical learning is underpinned by a sound understanding and use of numeracy skills, so emphasis is placed on this important learning area. In order to develop confidence in later abstract understanding, we recognise that rote learning of number is not sufficient and that students must be able to articulate why algorithms (e.g. addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) work in the way that they do, using their knowledge and application of place value. However, it is important that concepts such as times-tables are also learned thoroughly.</p> <p>Once a week, the senior school (Grades 3, 4, 5 &amp; 6) have a <i>Maths Mania</i> session when the students are streamed into ability levels within their classes. This enables the students to work within like-ability groups, to address specific learning areas and to enhance confidence.</p> <p>Numeracy and mathematical learning is monitored using regular and ongoing assessment tasks.</p> <p>Problem-solving tasks are used to develop a student's application of knowledge and ability to apply a range of skills and thinking strategies.</p> <p>Real-life maths (applied) situations are used in order for students to make connections between what they learn at school and their experiences of the world around them, e.g. during the Grade 6 Market Day activity.</p> <p>Students are given time to share their ideas and thinking, giving them opportunities to explain concepts, develop understanding and to learn from each other.</p>	
The Arts	Time allowance: 1 session per week (50 minutes)
<p>The Arts are valued as unique, expressive, creative and communicative forms that engage students in critical and creative thinking, helping them to understand themselves and their world.</p> <p>The three strands of Artistic learning are described by the Victorian Curriculum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Visual Art</li> <li>○ Drama</li> <li>○ Music</li> </ul> <p><b>Visual Art</b></p> <p>Birrale has an exceptional weekly Visual Art program that addresses creativity with learning about technique and application, as well as history, styles and artistic development. Student work is displayed throughout the school which brings the students pleasure and pride.</p>	

## Drama

The main focus for our drama teaching is during Term 3, culminating in a whole-school performance over two evenings at the end of the term. Students learn rudiments of stagecraft; voice projection and 'presence', scripts, dance, actions and stage positioning, creativity and team-work. They learn about costuming and scene/prop production, as well as the development of a performance with the final polish of lighting and sound. We often notice a significant change in student demeanour and confidence following the school performance that appears across other learning areas.

## Music

Music learning is conducted through whole-class lessons once a week. We also offer two optional vibrant, performing choirs (Junior and Senior) and a lunch-time jam-session with ukuleles and drums (also optional).

Birrale PS also has visiting private music teachers (piano, violin, guitar and band instrumental teachers) with band and string orchestras that regularly perform.

## Physical Education

**Time allowance: 1 session per week (50 minutes)**

The school emphasises the importance of Physical Education (PE) and sport, in the total education of a child. Although the dedicated time allowance is 50 minutes/week, there is also time for specific programs such as;

- cross-country running & practice
- swimming
- Athletics Day
- visiting special sport clinics
- Interschool sports (Grades 5 & 6)

During general PE lessons, the focus is on learning skills. However, dance, Tennis and gymnastics are also taught.

The school is affiliated with an interschool basketball tournament. Whilst this is primarily run by parents, students can join lunch time training sessions.

## STEM

**Time allowance: 1 session per week (50 minutes)**

Some of our STEM subjects are taught as discrete Science, Technology, and Maths sessions and some as mixed STEM lessons. We have had a STEM club for students who are high achievers as an extension opportunity and as a developmental stage whilst whole school resources and teacher expertise are addressed. STEM lessons are moving from these optional sessions into the formal classroom environment and will be covered in all areas in 2020.

Currently, dedicated Science lessons are taught at all levels (partly by the science teacher and partly by class teachers), using the prescribed Victorian Curriculum strands of;

- Earth and Space Science
- Physical Science
- Chemical Science
- Biological Science

Digital Technology	Time allowance: 1 session per week (50 minutes)
<p>In order to use Information and Computer Technology (ICT) as a tool for learning, students need to be explicitly taught the skills necessary to access information and to communicate effectively.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Classes learn how to use desktop, laptop and iPad technology</li> <li>○ Keyboarding skills are taught as a vital skill</li> <li>○ Word processing, Excel, PowerPoint and the use of certain apps are taught</li> <li>○ Access to Mathletics, Accelerated Reading, Reading Eggs programs are used</li> <li>○ Students are taught how to research effectively and about the importance of recognising and acknowledging primary and secondary sources</li> <li>○ Cybersafety is incorporated into all lessons and students are reminded of the importance of online safety, as well as respect and responsibility when using digital technology</li> </ul>	
LOTE: Mandarin	Time allowance: 1 session per week (50 minutes)
<p>Mandarin is taught from Foundation to Grade 6.</p> <p>In the global environment that we live in today, learning a second language is a valuable skill for all students. Not only is the language itself taught, but also learning about the culture that the language serves.</p>	
Units of Study	Time allowance: 1 session per week (50 minutes)
<p>Birralelee PS includes a variety of Units of Study for all grades. Some subjects are only taught in the senior area, but some such as Science, Design &amp; Technology and Health are taught from Foundation to Grade 6.</p> <p>Specific senior school subjects also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ History</li> <li>○ Geography</li> <li>○ Economics</li> <li>○ Civics &amp; Citizenship</li> <li>○ Media Arts</li> </ul> <p>One or two of these subjects are taught each term, sometimes integrated and some as discrete lessons.</p>	
Philosophy	Discrete & integrated learning
<p>Apart from the main curriculum areas of Literacy, Maths, STEM, The Arts, Digital Technology, PE, Individual units of study (SOSE), Mandarin (LOTE), we also address students' development of deeper thinking and application of learning through philosophy (ethics, metaphysics, epistemology, logic and aesthetics). This may be as discrete lessons, but also within the daily learning of capabilities and through speaking and listening activities.</p> <p>The exploration of ideas and adaptability to identify and examine ideas assists in student learning across the whole curriculum as it connects different learning areas (such as Science, maths - STEM, economics, reading comprehension, politics, historical events, spirituality and knotty ethical problems). It addresses problem solving skills, attitudes and assumptions, and challenges values and behaviour.</p> <p>Philosophy is a part of preparing our students as participants within the 21<sup>st</sup> century community.</p>	



<b>Social Education Program &amp; Wellbeing</b>	<b>Time allowance: 1 session per week (50 minutes)</b>
	<p>Not only does Birralee PS value academic learning, but also the development of resilient, content and inquisitive beings.</p> <p>A social learning program called Play is the Way is used to teach co-operation, awareness, compassion, respect and flexibility. The program utilises games where the learning is only successful when using certain strategies that the children recognise themselves, e.g. teamwork, turn taking, adapting games to suit and include the skills of all participants. The whole staff are trained in this program and the school has developed a consistency in expectations and language aligned with values of the program, e.g. praise is to be earned, realistic, specific and moderate.</p> <p>The wellbeing program at Birralee PS is particularly strong, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Body Safe</li> <li>○ Family Life</li> <li>○ Healthy Eating</li> <li>○ Respectful Relationships</li> <li>○ Play is the Way and Buddies (Foundation students with Grade 5 &amp; 6 students).</li> <li>○ Philosophy forms a part of this program too as a development of awareness, self-expression, personal values and judgement.</li> </ul> <p>As part of our wellbeing program, we have a weekly lesson for students with disabilities, called 'Our Space'. This is a specific time where certain children can practice social skills such as improving, communication, reading expression and responding appropriately, turn-taking and making friends.</p>
<b>Extra-curricular Activities</b>	<b>Lunchtime, before and after school activities</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Birralee PS is a member of the Victorian Primary Schools Sports Association so all Grade 5 &amp; 6 students participate in cross-country running, swimming and athletics carnivals as well as the regular summer and winter Inter School Sport competitions</li> <li>○ All students have the opportunity to participate in a Swimming and Water Safety Program</li> <li>○ School Choir &amp; Orchestra. Students have the option of joining the Junior Choir (open entry) or the Senior Choir (audition), and Band if learning a band instrument.</li> <li>○ School Concert: All students take part in the whole-school performance once a year</li> <li>○ Soirees: Junior Soiree and Senior Soiree. Musical evenings where students who are learning an instrument can perform</li> <li>○ Mandarin Lessons: after school student learning and support group</li> </ul>



○ School Camp Program:

Grade	Term	Name of Camp	Locality	Number of nights away	Camp focus/theme
Grade 3	Term 4	Ferngully Lodge	Healsville	1 night	Nature
Grade 4	Term 2	Camp Kangarooobie	Apollo Bay	2 nights	Marine
Grade 5	Term 4	Camp Curumbene	Echuca	4 nights	History
Grade 6	Term 4	Weekaway	Benloch	4 nights	Outdoor Ed

○ Clubs;

- Open Library (lunchtimes) for reading & board games
- Digimaker: coding
- Lego blocks technology
- Chess club (lunchtimes)
- Basketball (afterschool, weekend & lunchtime practices)
- Dance (lunchtime)
- Soccer (lunchtime)
- Guitar
- 'Jam'in with music'

## Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the School's three year review cycle.