

ST BRIGID'S COLLEGE

PRIMARY SCHOOL
2023 CURRICULUM HANDBOOK



ST. BRIGID'S
COLLEGE

PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

Dear Parents and Students,

I am delighted to present our Primary School Curriculum Handbook for 2023.

We are privileged to have a dedicated staff who work collaboratively and tirelessly for the wellbeing of our students. Our primary students are exposed to the expertise of many specialist teachers, and wide-ranging offerings which includes Robotics, the Arts, Languages and our very own Bush School; all within our marvelous facilities and grounds.

As they progress through the primary years we encourage our students to develop their strengths and interests to further their educational learning and develop the gifts and talents that God has given them.

In Catherine McAuley's words "You should remember that not to advance is to go back".

We encourage our students to develop their skills and motivation, preparing to take their place as future leaders in our society.

VERONICA PARKER
PRINCIPAL



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Section 1 – Learning at St Brigid’s College

1.1 Our Vision for Learning on the Primary Campus

A deep belief drives our primary campus that all students have the right to become successful learners and confident and creative individuals. Our teachers use evidence-based and well-researched strategies in their teaching to ensure students have at least a year's growth in their learning. Teachers set high expectations for the students. There is a strong focus on literacy and numeracy; these areas are explicitly taught, and teachers provide timely feedback to guide students. Based on students’ abilities, our teachers scaffold students to the next level of mastery. Students use their acquired knowledge for inquiry learning, project-based learning and deep learning. In addition, students are taught higher-order thinking, technological and computational skills within the classroom environment.

In addition, the primary campus strives to reflect in its structures, curriculum, and practices and the quality of the relationships within it, the particular spirit of mercy that Jesus lived and taught. The campus endeavors to reflect its commitment to these values by expressing its unity and solidarity with the poor, the unemployed, the distressed and the marginalized through its service to the community. Through the faithfulness to the spirit of Catherine McAuley’s vision, the primary campus works to provide a Catholic Education which enables the formation of the whole person imbued with those values which Catherine exemplified.

1.2 Type of Learners at St Brigid’s College

As learners at St Brigid’s College ...

- We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.
- We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.
- We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.
- We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. Moreover, we collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.
- We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.
- We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories and the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.
- We show empathy, compassion and respect. We commit to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and the world around us.

- We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.
- We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives- intellectual, physical, and emotional to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We acknowledge our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.
- We thoughtfully consider the world and our ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses to support our learning and personal development.

1.3 The West Australian Curriculum

All of the teaching programmes at St Brigid’s deliver the syllabus requirements of the West Australia curriculum.

Section 2 - Areas of Study

At each level of the programme students must study a subject from each of the nine Learning Areas. At St Brigid’s College these are –

| AREAS OF STUDY |
|-----------------------------------|
| Religious Education |
| English |
| Mathematics |
| Science |
| Humanities and Social Sciences |
| Languages (Italian) |
| Health and Physical Education |
| Technologies – Digital and Design |
| The Arts – Performing and Visual |

2.1 Religious Education

Religious Education is the first learning area at St Brigid's College.

The Religious Education learning area focuses on the knowledge and understanding of the Gospel as the Catholic Church hands on it to those who follow Christ in today's world. The content and processes of the learning area are intended to ensure that students, through a process of cultural, systematic and critical reflection, learn the teachings of the Gospels and understand what it means to be a Christian and how Christians live their lives.

Religious Education at St Brigid's College follows the Perth Archdiocese Religious Education Units of Work. These cover a range of concepts and topics progressively and developmentally. All students participate in daily Religious Education lessons, and within each class, there is a designated Prayer Area focusing on daily prayer and reflection. In addition, students partake in rostered Liturgies and Class Masses. Students are prepared to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation at the appropriate class levels. Liturgical Feast days are also celebrated within the College and with the broader community. Some students are also involved in Reflection Days.

2.2 Learning Areas

English

The English curriculum is built around the three interrelated strands of Language, Literature and Literacy. Therefore, teaching and learning programs should balance and integrate all three strands. Together the three strands focus on developing students' knowledge, understanding and skills in listening, reading, viewing, speaking, writing and creating. Learning in English builds on concepts, skills and processes developed in earlier years, and teachers will revisit, strengthen and develop these as needed.

a) Letters and Sounds

Letters and Sounds is introduced from Kindergarten to Year one. It is designed to help practitioners and teachers teach children how the alphabet works for reading and spelling by: fostering children's speaking and listening skills as valuable in their own right and as preparatory to learning phonic knowledge and skills; teaching high-quality phonic work at the point children should begin the programme. For most children, this will be by the age of five to equip them with the phonic knowledge and skills they need to become fluent readers by the age of seven.

b) Spelling Mastery

Spelling Mastery starts from Year Two onwards. Spelling Mastery is a six-level Direct Instruction series that teaches students dependable spelling skills by blending three approaches: the phonemic approach, the whole word approach and the morphemic approach.

c) **Talk For Writing**

Talk for Writing is an approach to teaching writing that emphasizes three teaching methods: ‘imitation’ (where pupils learn texts by heart, so they can discuss and dissect them), ‘innovation’ (where pupils adapt stories to create their own versions), and ‘invention’ (where teachers help pupils to create original stories). These tasks aim to improve writing ability by giving pupils an understanding of the structure and elements of written language.

Mathematics

Mathematics provides students with essential mathematical skills and knowledge in Number and Algebra, Measurement and Geometry, and Statistics and Probability. It develops the numeracy capabilities that all students need in their personal, work and civic life. It provides the fundamentals on which mathematical and professional applications of mathematics are built. The proficiency strands are Understanding, Fluency, Problem Solving, and Reasoning. They describe how content is explored or developed, that is, the thinking and doing of mathematics. This approach has been adopted to ensure students' proficiency in mathematical skills develops throughout the curriculum and becomes increasingly sophisticated over the years of schooling.

a) **BrightPath**

The Brightpath Mathematics online assessments provide immediate feedback to teachers to allow teacher to analyse their teaching for impact. Brightpath provides intuitive feedback about each student’s readiness to learn the mathematical skills and knowledge tested by each question. The feedback and reporting enable teachers to:

- Focus on next steps—target their teaching to students’ zones of proximal development
- Differentiate the teaching for individuals and small groups.
- Plan teaching around the feedback at a class-level.
- Track student growth in terms of learning progressions
- Compare class and school results with results for a broader population of students.

Science

Science provides an empirical way of answering interesting and important questions about the biological, physical and technological world. The knowledge it produces has proved to be a reliable basis for action in our personal, social and economic lives. Science is a dynamic, collaborative and creative human endeavour arising from our desire to make sense of our world through exploring the unknown, investigating universal mysteries, making predictions and solving problems. Science aims to understand a large number of observations in terms of a much smaller number of broad principles. Science knowledge is contestable and is revised, refined and extended as new evidence arises.

Science provides opportunities for students to develop an understanding of important science concepts and processes, the practices used to develop scientific knowledge, of science's contribution to our culture and society, and its applications in our lives. The curriculum supports students to develop the scientific knowledge, understandings and skills to make informed decisions about local, national and global issues and to participate, if they so wish, in science-related careers.

In addition to its practical applications, learning science is a valuable pursuit in its own right. Students can experience the joy of scientific discovery and nurture their natural curiosity about the world around them. In doing this, they develop critical and creative thinking skills and challenge themselves to identify questions and draw evidence-based conclusions using scientific methods. The wider benefits of this "scientific literacy" are well established, including giving students the capability to investigate the natural world and changes made to it through human activity.

Health and Physical Education

In Health and Physical Education, students learn how to enhance their own and others' health, safety, wellbeing and physical activity participation in varied and changing contexts. The Health and Physical Education curriculum offers students an experiential curriculum that is contemporary, relevant, challenging, enjoyable and physically active.

In Health and Physical Education, students develop the knowledge, understanding and skills to make decisions and to take action to strengthen their sense of personal identity and autonomy, build resilience, manage risk and develop satisfying, respectful relationships. They learn to take a critical approach to questioning physical activity and health practices and to use inquiry skills to research factors that influence the health, safety, wellbeing, and physical activity patterns of themselves, individuals, groups and communities. As students grow and mature, they learn to access, analyse and apply a variety of resources for the benefit of themselves and the communities to which they belong.

Humanities and Social Science

Humanities and Social Sciences is the study of human behaviour and interaction in social, cultural, environmental, economic and political contexts. Humanities and Social Sciences have a historical and contemporary focus, from personal to global contexts, and considers opportunities and challenges for the future. The Humanities and Social Sciences learning area in the Western Australian Curriculum comprises four subjects: Civics and Citizenship, Economics and Business, Geography and History. By studying Humanities and Social Sciences, students will develop the ability to question; think critically; make decisions based on evidence; devise proposals for actions, and communicate effectively.

Thinking about, reflecting on, and responding to issues requires understanding the key historical, geographical, political, legal, economic, business and societal factors involved and how these different factors interrelate. Thus, the Humanities and Social Sciences subjects provide students with the knowledge and skills to develop a broad understanding of the world in which we live and how people can participate as active and informed citizens.

Italian

Languages enable all students to communicate proficiently in a language other than English by providing students with essential communication skills, an intercultural capability, and an understanding of the role of language and culture in human communication. Students in Pre-Primary to Year Six study the language of Italian.

Technologies

Technologies enrich and impact the lives of people and societies globally. Society needs enterprising students who can make discerning decisions about the development and use of technologies, develop solutions to complex challenges and contribute to sustainable living patterns. Technologies can play an essential role in transforming, restoring and sustaining societies and natural, managed and constructed environments.

Technologies describe two distinct but related subjects:

- Design and Technologies, in which students use design thinking and technologies to generate and produce solutions for authentic needs and opportunities
- Digital Technologies, in which students use computational thinking and information systems to define, design and implement solutions.

In an increasingly technological and complex world, it is important to develop knowledge and skills to analyse and creatively respond to design and/or digital challenges. Through the practical application of technologies including digital technologies, students develop dexterity and coordination through experiential activities. Technologies motivates young people and engages them in a range of learning experiences that are transferable to family and home, constructive leisure activities, community contribution and the world of work.

Technologies provides students with authentic learning challenges that foster curiosity, confidence, persistence, innovation, creativity, respect and cooperation. These attributes are necessary when using and developing solutions to make sense of complex ideas and relationships in all areas of learning. Technologies helps students to be regional and global citizens, capable of actively and ethically communicating and collaborating.

The Arts

The Arts have the capacity to engage, inspire and enrich all students, exciting the imagination and encouraging them to reach their creative and expressive potential. The term 'creativity' plays a critical role in all arts subjects. The Arts learning area comprises five subjects: Dance, Drama, Media Arts, Music and Visual Arts. Together they provide opportunities for students to learn how to create, design, represent, communicate and share their imagined and conceptual ideas, emotions, observations and experiences, as they discover and interpret the world.

Visual Arts

Visual Arts incorporates all three fields of art, craft and design. Students create visual representations that communicate, challenge and express their own and others' ideas, both as artists and audience members. They develop perceptual and conceptual understanding, critical reasoning and practical skills through exploring and expanding their understanding of their world, and other worlds.

Visual Arts engages students in a journey of discovery, experimentation and problem-solving relevant to visual perception and visual language. Students undertake this journey by utilising visual techniques, technologies, practices and processes. Visual Arts supports students' ability to recognise and develop cultural appreciation of visual arts in the past and contemporary contexts through exploring and responding to artists and their artworks

Music

Music has the capacity to engage, entertain, challenge, inspire and empower students. Studying music stimulates imaginative and innovative responses, critical thinking and aesthetic understanding, and encourages students to reach their creative and expressive potential.

Music exists distinctively in every culture and is a basic expression of human experience. Students' active participation in music, individually and collaboratively, draws on their own traditions and life experiences. These experiences help them to appreciate and meaningfully engage with music practices and traditions of other times, places, cultures and contexts.

2.3 Homework

Generally, in the Primary School, the recommended homework is comprised of nightly reading, spelling and a set of tasks for the school week.

| | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Kindergarten – Pre-Primary | 5 minutes daily |
| Years One – Two | 10 minutes daily |
| Years Three – Four | 15 minutes daily |
| Years Five – Six | 20 minutes daily |

Students use their dairies to record home learning tasks and parents are asked to sign these each week.

Section 3 - The Early Years

3.1 Our Learning Environment

Our Early Learning Centre offers an environment, catering for three to six-year-old children within a larger school setting. We aim to create a safe, supportive, nurturing and stimulating learning environment which consolidates and extends the children's interests and skills, and enables them to develop the dispositions to be life-long learners. We acknowledge that the early years plays a significant role in laying the foundations for continued success in learning. Therefore, as educators we hold a strong commitment to the world's best practices and implement a pedagogy that reflects Investigative play, Inquiry Approach, a Reggio Emilia inspired approach, the Early Years Learning Framework and the National Quality Standards. At the same time, Literacy and Numeracy are explicitly taught, providing students with step by step instruction on what to do and how to do it.

Our approach to early childhood education is shaped by our child's image as a competent and capable individual who is rich in potential. We recognise that children possess a wealth of experiences, knowledge and understandings. Our intention is for each child to develop a strong sense of identity and the confidence and skills needed to make meaning of and shape their world. Through active listening and observation and a close working relationship involving children, parents and fellow educators, we are committed to uncovering how each child perceives his/her world, enabling us to build on levels of understanding. Our play-based approach offers children the opportunity and the time to play, discover and explore, question and predict, revisit and reflect, wonder, imagine, and dream. This is also achieved through explicit, intentional, child-centred, play-based teaching and learning. In addition, we fully embrace our beautiful natural surrounds in our unique Bush School, when students spend the day outdoors where they can be noisy, messy and use all their senses to engage in rich learning experiences.

3.2 Partnership with Parents

Parents and families are encouraged to work in partnership with their child's teacher. Parents maintain communication in person or via email with the class teacher. In addition, parent Information sessions are held to discuss various aspects of early childhood development and education. These consolidate the vital links between the home and the classroom. The benefits of a mutually supportive relationship cannot be over-emphasised. Children develop confidence and healthy understanding of themselves and others in a social context that respects and recognises individual differences.

Section 4 - Learning Differences

The Learning Differences Team consists of specialist staff who work closely with the classroom teachers to ensure that students' individual needs are recognised and catered for. Through the partnership with parents and sharing information regarding their child's specific needs, students are given every opportunity to reach their full potential through curriculum differentiation and promoting a learning environment that celebrates individual differences.

Assessments for all students occur at the beginning of each new year and at periodic points of the year. Suitable programmes are prepared to monitor and evaluate student progress. Individual Plans may be created, where learning adjustments are outlined to address students' particular educational needs and identify strengths and interests. Support is primarily offered to students within the classroom setting and at times students are withdrawn to participate in intervention programmes that are research-based, systematic, explicit and target individual needs such as the MiniLit and MacqLit Programs. MiniLit is an early intervention literacy programs consisting of carefully structured and sequenced lessons, focusing on reading instruction and is delivered to students in small groups. The MacqLit Reading Program is available for Year Three and above children who need additional help in reading and comprehending or developing fluency and confidence in reading.

Enrichment includes providing students with challenges and opportunities to engage in extension activities to assess and accommodate individual growth and change throughout the year.

4.1 The da Vinci Decathlon

The da Vinci Decathlon is an academic competition designed to challenge and stimulate the minds of school students. Students compete in teams consisting of eight students across ten disciplines including Engineering, Mathematics, Code Breaking, Art and Poetry, Science and English. Children from Years Five and Six who enjoy creativity, problem-solving and lateral thinking type activities are encouraged to be involved. Once selected, students begin training for the competition as a team. Training is about developing teamwork, respecting each other's strengths and contributions, and creative thinking.

4.2 Robotics and Coding

The Robotics programme is highly engaging, with hands-on, problem-solving activities that prepare students for the 21st century. EV3 Mindstorm kits have given us the capability of offering Robotics from Years Three to Six. Through this programme all students have learnt how to problem solve, build and program robots to meet specific challenges set by teachers. In addition, our younger students in Years One and Two, have access to Lego WeDo 2.0® kits and are introduced to simple visual programming in a highly motivating programme. This is a programme embedded into the Digital Technologies curriculum.

Students learn about concepts such as Computational Thinking, Coding, Design and Construction, Project Management and Project Evaluation as a natural course of action within everything they do. We believe this model mimics the procedures of everyday life and enables students to become more competent inquirers. In addition, in Years One to Six, the students are involved in a specialist robotics programme, which complements the study of technology in the classroom.

Section 5 - Assessments

5.1 Assessment

Assessment is the process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about student learning. At St Brigid's College, the central purpose of assessment is to improve learning outcomes of students. A sound assessment system provides information about whether the learning goals of the teaching program have been achieved and assists with making decisions about teaching and learning practices. Reporting is the process of communicating information about achievement and progress gained from the assessment process. The purpose of reporting is to support teaching and learning by providing feedback to students and teachers. Students' learning achievements and progress are also reported using SEQTA. This information about students' accomplishments is valuable for school and system comprehensive planning and reporting.

Formative Assessments

Formative assessments are ongoing informal assessments, reviews, and observations in a classroom to monitor student learning and provide continuous feedback that instructors can use to improve their teaching and learning. More specifically, formative assessments that help students identify their strengths and weaknesses and target areas that need work are used to modify and validate instruction.

Summative Assessments

Summative assessments are used to determine if students have mastered specific competencies and identify instructional areas that need additional attention.

5.2 Types of Assessments

Common Assessment

Teachers work collaboratively to ensure a standard curriculum is taught to both classes. Year group excursions organised and linked to the curriculum and common assessments are undertaken by all students in a year group. Common assessment and other data allow for the accurate allocation of grades for each year group.

On-Entry Assessment Program (Pre-Primary Only)

The On-Entry Assessment Program (OLI) is the mandated assessment for all Pre-primary students. The evaluation is completed in a one-to-one interview situation and focuses on literacy and numeracy skills for students in Pre-primary. It assists with:

- Assessing the progress of students in literacy, numeracy and phonological awareness
- Diagnosing individual student work and providing data to indicate what areas students are achieving or underachieving
- Predicting future performance for identifying individuals who might benefit from early intervention.

Observation Survey

The Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement is administered to Year One and Two students and at-risk students in Year Three. The systematic observation tasks help teachers to observe young children's early literacy behaviours through a series of tasks. The observation survey provides easy-to-read accounts of individual progress made by students between two specific points of time.

Reading Running Records

Running Record is an assessment tool that provides an insight into a student's reading as it is happening. A Running Record provides information on the following:

- a score of word reading accuracy
- an analysis of a reader's errors and self-corrections
- an analysis of the reading strategies used.

Using a series of established conventions, a teacher can quickly and accurately record what the reader says as they read a text or section of a text aloud. After the reading, the teacher completes an analysis.

Literacy Pro Evaluation

When a student achieves Reading Level 30, they move to the Scholastic Lexile Reading program. Students undertake an initial test to determine their comprehension level. Literacy Pro assesses students' reading comprehension through the Lit Pro Test. It determines their Lexile Reading Measure by using authentic passages from fiction and non-fiction texts.

The program is adaptive and a student starts the test on an average Lexile item for their year level. If a student answers a question correctly, he/she is given a more challenging question. If the student answers the question incorrectly, a question at a lower Lexile is posed. After approximately 26 to 36 questions, the student's reading level in Lexile will be determined. Teachers can also easily assign the LitPro Test to be taken every term to track their class.

Section 6 – Primary School Contacts

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