

# CASTLE COVE PUBLIC SCHOOL

## Stage 3 - 2018 Newsletter

### **The Middle Schools Years at Castle Cove**

Our successful Middle Schools program for Years 5 and 6 students continues this year, aiming to provide a smooth transition from primary to high school. This program caters for students, being grouped with like-ability peers, and aims to equip them with a sense of responsibility and independence. We find that through grouping we are better able to differentiate learning experiences for the range of abilities through the provision of a stimulating learning environment. Teachers support the students in managing their own learning. We also have a keen awareness of the changing emotional, social and physical needs as students move from childhood to adolescence and how these changes impact the students as learners.

Ability grouping occurs in both English and Mathematics lessons. We structure the classes into four groups. The advantage of this is that students are grouped with like-ability students. The structure consists of dedicated groups for both Years 5 and 6 and a group for those who are capable of extension, enrichment or acceleration. There is scope for students to change groups throughout the year as appropriate. The programs across the groups are similar, but it is the depth and breadth of learning experiences which vary from group to group.

Stage 3 students are encouraged to develop their leadership skills. In 2018 we are once again running our Peer Leader committees – Environment, Sport, Buddies and Communications. Year 5 will be given an opportunity to participate in the Peer Leader program in Term 4.

## **Key Learning Areas (KLAs)**

### **English**

All areas of the English program are integrated with each other and across the KLAs. For this, we are using the **NSW English Syllabus** to program lessons. Through responding to and composing a wide range of texts and through the close study of texts, students will develop knowledge, understanding and skills in order to:

Objective A communicate through speaking, listening, reading, writing, viewing and representing

Objective B use language to shape and make meaning according to purpose, audience and context

Objective C think in ways that are imaginative, creative, interpretive and critical

Objective D express themselves and their relationships with others and their world

Objective E learn and reflect on their learning through their study of English

### **Reading and viewing**

In Years 5 and 6, students are developing the skills of critical analysis through novel studies, increased awareness of inferential meaning and learning a variety of strategies to develop understanding at a deeper level. Reading at home is compulsory and all students are required to complete the Premier's Reading Challenge as part of their Literacy program. Parents are encouraged to monitor their child's daily home reading and support where necessary. As part of our Library program students will learn to locate and evaluate information from different sources, including the internet.

### **Speaking and Listening**

Students will learn effective strategies for oral presentations, public speaking and debating. The Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition is held in Term 2 and all students will participate by preparing and delivering speeches on a selection of multicultural-themed topics. Learning to be an effective listener is also an important part of the program. Presentations may be linked to HSIE themes or other KLAs.

## Writing and Representing

In Term 1 our focus for Stage 3 students will be covering a range writing styles. This will coincide with our Year 5 students participating in the NAPLAN assessments early next term. While the official writing genre has not been disclosed, we will prepare our students with the essential skills as we do each year. Persuasive writing includes exposition, response, reviews and letters. Students will learn to draft, revise, edit and publish their writing, with focus on more sophisticated vocabulary, a variety of sentence structures, correct grammar, spelling and punctuation. This term, Year 5 students will be participating in the Willoughby Council Local Wildlife Writing Competition, while Year 6 students will be entering the Australia, My Country writing competition.

## Mathematics

The Mathematics syllabus is divided into three content strands: Number and Algebra, Measurement and Geometry, and Statistics and Probability. The Working Mathematically outcomes link the content strands and provide a framework of numeracy and mathematical reasoning. Students will also apply their knowledge to solve problems through mathematical investigations. Explicit instruction of problem solving strategies is fundamental. Our Mathematics program is complemented by the Mathletics website: [www.mathletics.com](http://www.mathletics.com). Students are expected to be able to quickly recall times tables facts up to 12 as it is essential for fast mathematical processing. The students will be completing their Maths Mastery Badges which are the knowledge and skills aligned to the syllabus outcomes.

## History and Geography

Our topics will be drawn from the new History and Geography syllabi and are taught in a two year cycle. This year, students will develop their research skills through three main studies: Engaging with of Asia (including the study of an Asian country), Colonial Australia (with a focus on the Gold Rush) and Australia's Global Connections (trade, migration, tourism, sport and aid).

## Science and Technology

Stage 3 students attend a weekly 80 minute Science lesson with Mrs Rao in their home classes. Science topics include Robotics, Adaptations, Renewable Energy and Sustainable School.

A note from Mrs Rao.....

*In Term 1, Stage 3 students will complete a unit on Robotics. Year 5 students will be introduced to the science of robotics and the role that robots play in our world. They will be given the opportunity to build Lego EV3 robots and develop coding and programming skills using these robots. Year 6 students will have the opportunity to extend their programming knowledge and capability by completing challenges in the Lego Space Challenge which has a focus on exploration on Mars.*

***Students are to complete a short research assignment on robotics which is due in Week 7.***

*All information related to the Science program in CCPS is on the Science website [www.castlecovescience.com](http://www.castlecovescience.com) Please visit the Stage 3 pages including the Stage 3 Homework page and the Stage 3 Investigation Assignment page for detailed information on your child's work in Science. I update the website regularly and the information regarding assignments and homework is always current.*

*Please do not hesitate to contact me at [anjali.chandrasekar-rao@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:anjali.chandrasekar-rao@det.nsw.edu.au) with any queries or concerns.*

*I look forward to an exciting year of investigation and discovery with your children.*

*Mrs. Rao*

ICT outcomes are embedded in all KLAs. Foundation computer skills are taught in home class lessons and include skill development and application in a variety of programs. In Term 2, we will begin workshops that focus on a variety of skills when planning and filming short films. This will prepare students for entering the short film festival, **Chatzfest**.

## Creative and Practical Arts (CAPA)

The Creative Arts program provides opportunities for students to learn to work within and learn about the art forms of visual arts, music, drama and dance. These will complement and enrich areas of study in other subjects.

## **Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE)**

Term 1: Safe Living, Bounce Back (core values), grade sport (team skill development), Moving Bodies

Term 2: Drug education, Bounce Back, PSSA/school sport/tennis

Term 3: Child protection, Life Education, Bounce Back, PSSA/school sport/tennis

Term 4: Healthy Lifestyle, Surf education/school sport/tennis

### **Moving Bodies**

On Thursdays in Term 1 only, the students will participate in athletics and dance programs taught by Moving Bodies. Students wear their normal school uniform and school shoes on this day.

### **Bounce Back**

This class-based, pastoral care program called "BOUNCE BACK" encourages self-reflection, resilience and social skills.

## **Homework**

Homework is a valuable part of education as it allows for practising, extending and consolidating class work. It trains students to plan and organise their time and to develop a range of skills in identifying information resources. It establishes good study habits, concentration and self-discipline and aids students in their transition to high school.

Students can expect the following homework on a weekly basis and over the term:

Required reading time (20 – 40 mins per night)

- Spelling (Soundwaves)
- Athletics tasks
- Novel / reading contract work (class novels can usually be used for the Premier's Reading Challenge)
- Writing tasks
- Class assignments
- Speech preparation
- Science investigations

## **Extra-Curricular**

Students are offered a broad range of extra-curricular activities, including dance, debating, chess, band, library monitors, sport, Carbon Cops, Robotics, Earth Kids, and Tournament of Minds, Prosthetic Hand Challenge, and are encouraged to participate to enrich their final Castle Cove years.

## **NAPLAN**

Year 5: NAPLAN key dates for Term 2 are 15, 16, 17 May. Additional information about the assessments can be found at <http://nap.edu.au/>

NAPLAN will not be online for CCPS students this year. Lessons for Year 6 students will remain unaffected.

## **Reward System**

Students are given Castle Cards for positive reinforcement and acknowledgement of effort and achievement. When they have 10 Castle Cards they bring them to school and receive a Merit Certificate. When 10 Merit Certificates are earned, students receive a Bronze Certificate at our K-6 Assembly. This system continues through to Silver and Gold Certificates. Students need to be encouraged to look after awards earned, so they can bring them to school to receive their next award.

Students are also given praise, encouragement, stickers, stamps, house points as positive reinforcement.

### **Notes, Money and Clothing**

If your child has been absent from school please send a note or email stating the dates and reason for absence within two days of your child's absence. If they are not in the classroom by 9.25am or they have to leave early please complete a partial absence slip at the office and pass it on to the class teacher (we need these for our roll which is a legal document).

Excursion permission notes are to be put in the silver letterboxes in the office on the left hand side as you walk into the administration building. Children in Stage 3 should be encouraged to be responsible for putting their permission slips in the silver letterboxes before school.

Please make sure your child's clothing and stationery items are labelled with the name of the owner. Hats and jumpers need to be named so they can be returned if lost.

**Year 7 2019 Selective High School Placement Test** (Year 6) is on Thursday, 15 March.

### **Academic Competition Dates**

Participation in the UNSW ICAS competitions is **optional**. The ICAS tests assess higher-order thinking and problem solving skills, although it should be noted that these assessments are not curriculum based. Students are entered if their entry fee has been paid prior to the closing date. Applications for these tests will be sent home soon.

2018 competition dates are:

Digital Technologies	Tuesday 8 May
Science	Tuesday 29 May
Spelling	Wednesday 13 June
Writing	Thursday 14 June
English	Tuesday 31 July
Mathematics	Tuesday 14 August

We look forward to a great year working with you and your child. Please don't hesitate to book an appointment with your child's teacher if you have any concerns through the year.

Yours sincerely,

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