



23 February 2009

Dear Parents/Carers

## Stage 3 (Year 5 and 6) Parent Information - Term 1 2009

Welcome to Stage 3 at Westmead Public School. The teachers and support staff working with Stage 3 students are:

4/5D	Ms Samantha Doran	5H	Mr David Higinbotham	5P	Miss Krystal Partijo
5/6J	Ms Jodie Pearce	5G	Mrs Jennie Gregory	6P	Miss Chloe Purkis
6K	Miss Emma Koop	ESL	Mrs Julie Crawford	PD/H/PE	Ms Louise Ewing
STL	Ms Janelle Singleton	6E	Mr Lee Englefield (Assistant Principal)		
ESL	Ms Jenny Simmonds (Deputy Principal)				

We are look forward to an enjoyable and creative year with our students. If you have any questions about your child, please do not hesitate to contact the school to make an appointment with his/her teacher. Below is an outline of what we will be covering and encouraging in our classes this year.

### English

English encompasses the strands of talking and listening, reading and writing. Your child will be immersed in a text rich environment and will constantly be using all the strands of English. Our continued focus this year to enhance students' abilities to answer inferential questions (to understand implied meaning). To assist your child with this, we encourage your child to read as much as possible. Through reading, your child will learn how to be creative and will better understand the world around them. It is essential that your child **reads a variety of good quality texts**, especially novels (chapter books) where they will read creative stories and become immersed in rich grammatical forms (figurative language, metaphors, similes, and personification). In class your child will be involved in literature circles where these skills are taught and practised through enjoyable activities and supportive group work.

Your child will write a variety of text types this term. We will teach and revise most of the text types and will emphasise **creative writing and good editing skills**. Your child will also have a weekly spelling list and may complete a variety of activities in class. All students in Stage 3 will have the opportunity to participate in debating and public speaking competitions. In class, your child will participate in discussions where they will be encouraged to **take a risk** and **have a go** expressing their opinions.

### Mathematics

Mathematics covers the strands of: working mathematically, number, space and geometry, patterns and algebra, measurement. Over the last few years, students in Stage 3 have achieved excellent results in Mathematics. However, the areas that students tend to have difficulty with are space and geometry, measurement and problem solving. We are teaching students better problem solving techniques by immersing them in the language of Mathematics. We are also focusing on **working mathematically** as a continued school target. This strand of Mathematics covers outcomes where students need to reason, justify, question and analyse their mathematical knowledge. To achieve all of the areas of Mathematics, your child will be involved in whole class and group activities. Students in Years 5 and 6 will be exposed to some samples of questions from past Basic Skills Tests and SNAP test (Year 7 Mathematics test) and NAPLAN tests to prepare them for the national test.

### HSIE and Science

This term students in Stage 3 will be investigating cultures/civilisations with a focus on architecture. Each class will be involved in design and make and investigation activities. The following is a list of topics/units each class will be working on:

4/5D, 5/6J, 5D, 6K	Ancient Egypt
5H, 6P, 6E	The Romans
5P	Ancient Greece

### Creative and Practical Arts

Students in Stage 3 will have lessons in craft, visual arts, music and drama at different periods throughout the year. Students are also encouraged to participate in the senior choir, school band, guitar club, recorder group, flute group and art club. These creative pursuits help to create 'the whole child' and will give those students with talents in the arts a great way to express themselves.

## Personal Development, Health and Personal Exercise (PD/H/PE)

This term students will be involved in healthy eating lessons. All students are encouraged to live healthy lifestyles and take care of their bodies. Students will be taught about good nutrition habits, healthy recipes and the importance of physical activity.

Sport is on Friday mornings for students in Years 3 to 6. Students not involved in PSSA sport, yoga or tennis will participate in games skills at school.

## Homework

Homework is varied from class to class. Your child's teacher will set homework most weeks. The only extra homework that **we recommend for students is to read** a variety of good quality texts. This will assist your child immensely.

Every student in Years 5 and 6 has a **diary**. Students need to bring their diaries to school every day. This initiative is to improve students' organisational skills in preparation for high school. We ask that you check and sign your child's diary weekly as all important information will be written by your child.

## The Whole Child

As teachers, we believe that it is our job to assist in the development of the **whole child**. This means that we encourage our students to develop skills and interests in a vast range of areas, not just Mathematics and English. **Experiences are a very important aspect** of this development and the opportunity to attend excursions, go to camp, see performances, participate in sport and artistic activities in our opinion can only enhance the development of the whole child. We encourage you to allow your child to participate in as many activities as possible. As part of this philosophy we also encourage the following things in all of our students:

- \* A sense of humour
- \* Perseverance
- \* Divergent thinking
- \* Intellectual curiosity
- \* Sensitivity/Empathy
- \* Imagination
- \* Reasoning ability
- \* Taking a risk with their learning

## Selective High School

Many students in Years 5 and 6 will sit for the selective high school exam this year (Year 6) and in 2010 (Year 5). The process to gain entry into a selective high school begins in Year 5. The school gives half of the English and Mathematics mark for your child's overall selective high school score (50% school mark, 50% test score). The students in Year 5 will be assessed at school throughout the year in English and Mathematics. Anything your child does outside of the school (ie – tutor or coaching colleges) does not count towards the score. Students are assessed on their overall performance for the entire year's work. Everything your child does at school counts for selective high school scores.

## Other information

- **Stage 3 camp** – Milson Island (Term 4, 28th to 30th October)
- **Equipment** – please make sure your child has all of the necessary equipment each day
- **Donations** – we need tissues urgently
- **Stage 3 Assembly** is held on Friday afternoons from 2:20pm. Each class is allocated a time each term to host the assembly. This assists in the development of confidence and public speaking skills of students. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to attend.
- **Year 5 National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy** (Test replacing the Basic Skills Test) – 12, 13 and 14 May. Year 5 students will be tested on Spelling, Grammar, Punctuation, Writing, Reading and Numeracy. For further information go to: <http://www.naplan.edu.au/>
- **Money Collection** Money is only collected on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

We look forward to your support and encouragement of student successes this year.

Yours sincerely

Jeanette Detheridge  
Principal

Jenny Simmonds  
Deputy Principal

Lee Englefield  
Assistant Principal