

PURPOSE

- The purpose of the English program at Kew East Primary School (KEPS) is to develop literate students who are analytical and critical thinkers of texts they read, compose engaging texts in a variety of genres for differing purposes and audiences and speak and listen confidently, thoughtfully and respectfully in a variety of settings.

POLICY GUIDELINES

- The KEPS English program is an essential component of the Victorian Curriculum. It incorporates the strands of Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal, Interpersonal and Interdisciplinary Learning and focuses on the English Dimensions, within the English Domain, of Reading and Viewing, Writing, Speaking and Listening. These dimensions are also represented through the strands of Language, Literature and Literacy.
- The KEPS English program integrates the **Practice Principles for Excellence of Teaching and Learning**, in particular, having:
 - high expectations for all students to achieve;
 - providing a supportive and productive learning environment that promotes inclusion and collaboration;
 - giving students a voice and agency in their learning, collaboratively planning in teams for a differentiated and challenging curriculum for all students;
 - rigorous assessment practices including student feedback;
 - developing deep learning challenges including opportunities to apply new knowledge by developing critical, creative and higher order thinking skills; and
 - using evidenced based strategies to drive improvement, such as, assessment, moderation, analysis of student data, and align to P&D plan goals and AIP goals.
- The teaching of the English program incorporates the **High Impact Teaching Strategies (HITS)**. In particular, goal setting, explicit teaching, differentiated planning and teaching, structuring lessons, worked examples and modelling, multiple exposures, metacognitive strategies with application of higher order thinking and reflection, student feedback, and opportunities for students to work collaboratively.
- The English program is designed to actively engage all students by providing a differentiated program based on individual needs and abilities, ensuring meaningful connections are made by students across the school.
- Teachers at KEPS focus on improving practices to meet the diverse needs of all students, while implementing a school agreed consistent approach for reading and writing, implementing the KEPS Instructional Approach and agreed lesson structure consistently across Foundation - 6.
- The teaching of English is to ensure that students are literate and equipped with the knowledge, skills and behaviours to become inquiring, independent and lifelong critical and creative learners.
- KEPS reading approach includes explicit instruction in letter-sound correspondence (phonics), as well as knowledge about language structure (syntax) and meaning (semantics). Comprehension is explicitly taught with a focus on, 'about', 'within' and 'beyond' the text being read, based on Fountas and Pinnell strategies.
- Writing develops students' ability plan and compose texts in multiple genres in an engaging way for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- Spelling - Current research informs us that students learn to spell pattern by pattern, rather than word by word. The English language is very complex and irregular by nature, thus students need a range of strategies to draw upon when spelling unknown words. Phonics as a standalone strategy is simply not enough. Students learn best to spell by being metacognitive, strategic spellers who can make connections to what is known and to patterns. It is for these reasons that at KEPS we use a consistent, whole school, developmentally appropriate, problem solving approach to spelling. Our approach explicitly teaches three specific spelling strategies of **sound, visual and meaning**.
- Assessment methods are implemented and analysed for formative and summative reasons. Firstly, to inform and plan for student needs and to determine achievement standards. Assessment practices measure and monitor student progress; what the students have achieved and what they need to learn
- English as Additional Language (EAL) students are identified by teachers on entry to KEPS and are catered for by using the EAL Victorian Curriculum. Students who have EAL, are placed on this curriculum opposed to the English Curriculum if they are working below the expected standard for their level in any area of English.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

General

- The English program is implemented adhering to the KEPS instructional approach of whole/part/whole where all students will study a sequential and developmentally appropriate English course based upon the learning focus statements contained within the Victorian Curriculum.
- KEPS develops English teaching and learning sequences in reading and writing that embed speaking and listening and grammar and punctuation across all year level teams aligned to the KEPS Scope and Sequence document and informed from cohort data.
- The teaching of English study for each student will consist of a minimum of 4 x 50 min lessons per week of reading and a minimum 4 x 50 min lessons of writing as well as 3 x 20 min lessons of spelling.
- Student progress in all dimensions of English will be reported in half and end of year academic reports, as well as in the school's annual report.
- A differentiated program is provided to cater for the identified needs of each student and a variety of resources, both concrete and interactive, will be used in response to the different learning styles.
- Reading is guided by the Fountas and Pinnell Systems of Strategic Actions of thinking within, beyond and about texts. Within this framework students focus on the strategies of; searching and using information, monitoring and self-correcting, solving words, maintaining fluency, adjusting, summarising, predicting, making connections, synthesising, inferring, analysing and critiquing. We also follow DET advice (Literacy Toolkit), with modelled, shared, guided and independent reading. All students engage with individual goals with teachers conferencing 1:1 to set and monitor multiple goals across each term and reflection time in lessons linked to the focus, as per the KEPS instructional approach and lesson structure.
- Phonics is explicitly taught in Foundation and Year 1 using the 'Sounds Write' approach. Students in Year 2-6 who are at risk engage in intervention using synthetic phonics.
- Writing uses DET advice (Literacy Toolkit) and the 6+1 writing traits referred to as 'VOICES' (writer's voice, organisation, ideas, conventions, excellent word choice, sentence fluency and presentation) as well as elements of the Seven Steps writing approach with modelled, shared, guided and interactive writing. Writing lessons also incorporate teaching groups and individual writing conferences on learning goals and reflection time, as per the KEPS instructional approach and lesson structure.
- Student goals are developed for reading, aligning with our approach of FP (within, beyond and about) and writing, following our approach 6+1 (VOICES). All level teams have goal grids developed that cater developmentally to their year level following these approaches and students have individual goals set and monitored regularly, with students supported to practise their goal and procure evidence to prove their progress to achieve the set goal and move to another individualised goal, through a 1:1 student and teacher conference.
- Strong links are made between reading and writing, as per the English Scope and Sequence with careful and well selected mentor texts used in the English program.
- Spelling explicitly teaches the sound, visual and meaning strategies:
- Sound strategy – thinking about the sounds you hear in words.
- Visual strategy – thinking about the way the word looks or the letter patterns.
- Meaning strategy – thinking about the structure and origin of words.
- Teachers use their understanding of the five developmental stages, determined from errors in writing, being pre-communicative, semi phonetic, phonetic, transitional or the correct spelling stages.
- Teachers plan 3 x 20 minute spelling sessions per week, each session focussing on one strategy. Sound, visual or meaning strategies are explicitly taught to students during these lessons, with an introduction, investigation using an inquiry approach and concluding with a reflection that involves making meaningful generalisations that can then be applied to their writing.
- Students are encouraged to be independent, strategic spellers in writing sessions, applying what is learnt during spelling sessions to improve the quality of their writing.
- Students use hands on resources that reflect what has been taught in spelling sessions, for examples, generalisations from an investigations as well as a variety of other resources, such as, proof reading of errors spelling resources.
- Grammar will be taught through texts and practical tasks across reading and writing, being embedded in a meaningful manner.
- Speaking and Listening is embedded into all teaching and learning areas, for example, guided reading discussions, as well as explicitly taught through following of singular and multi-step instructions and a variety of presentations, eg. formal and informal oral presentations with and without digital technology.
- Weekly work programs will include reading and writing lessons that adhere to the KEPS lesson structure, whole/part/whole, that has a whole class explicit focus, teaching group focus (eg. explicitly planned guided reading and writing groups), differentiated learning tasks and reflection at end of each lesson on the focus.
- English skills and understandings will be integrated into units of work and the other curriculum areas, where meaningful.

- Parent 'Classroom Helpers Program' is implemented to develop a supportive home/school relationship in Foundation – Year 2 classrooms, with parents engaging in a 'Classroom Helpers Information Session' to be able to assist in the school setting.
- The English Leader will support teachers with EAL students to ensure current DET guidelines are adhered to for teaching of and assessing EAL students. A school data bank of current EAL students and their progress will be maintained.
- The English Leader will be responsible for coordinating English across the school as well as implementing an English budget developed by staff and resourced by school council.
- Literacy intervention will be offered to students in Yr 1 – 6 based on identified and analysed needs and regularly reflected on and updated to reflect changing student needs.
- Individual Learning Plans will be implemented for 'at risk' students 18+ months above their expected level and for students working at 12 months or more below the expected standard in their respective year level.
- Students are monitored at each reporting stage to determine if they are to remain on an EAL report and are only moved off once they are working at or above level in Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening on the standard English Victorian Curriculum. Teachers provide appropriate learning opportunities linked to the EAL Victorian Curriculum.

Assessment

- Assessment is based on the Victorian Curriculum standards.
- Individual student abilities will be monitored and assessed using formal and informal assessments as outlined in the KEPS Assessment Schedule.
- A variety of assessment methods are used such as peer, self, teacher and electronic.
- Assessments are used by teachers to inform weekly teaching programs, with PLT meetings having a regular focus and in depth analysis of English assessments.
- Regular moderation of students' work between teachers is conducted within and across teams to ensure consistent assessment judgments are made.
- Staff Professional Learning opportunities provide opportunities for staff to build their capacity to assess accurately and use assessments to inform teaching and learning.

EVALUATION

The English policy will be reviewed every 4 years in accordance with the policy schedule or as required.

Policy Area:
Teaching and Learning

Ratified School Council:
July 2021

Next Review:
July 2025