

*Information*

*For*

*Parents*

*Stage Three*

2008

# **Staff**

## **Stage 3 Class Teachers**

**5/6G – Tasmin Gillett (Assistant Principal)**

– Nikki Tobin

**5/6R – Kylie Renwick**

**5/6H – Lyn Hardy**

**5/6D – Roxanne Davies**

**Librarian and Computer Teacher – Jenny Kelly**

**PE Teacher – Jo Stevens**

**French Teacher – Liz Fennell**

**Principal – Peter Whelan**

## Stage Three Students

Stage Three is regarded as the beginning of the middle years of schooling. As children progress through the middle years they will become less attached to parents and the importance of the peer group will increase. They will seek greater independence and parents may at times feel they are no longer needed. The reality is that parents are needed more than ever.

It is during the middle years that children are the most likely to become disengaged from school and learning. Therefore, Stage Three teachers have all received training in catering for the needs of this age group and provide the following information to assist parents in working towards keeping your child engaged with school and learning.

1. Regular attendance is crucial to maintaining engagement. Allowing absences for birthdays, visiting relatives or when not ill conveys the message that school and learning are not important. Regular attendance including arriving at school by 9.20 a.m. is necessary to enhance a desire for learning that will continue throughout high school.
2. Maintain a positive attitude towards school and the child's ability to succeed. Relaying a message that parents did not like school or were unsuccessful will affect your child's attitude regarding their own likelihood of success.
3. Stage Three students need somewhere set up for them to study and do projects. Some children just can't organise themselves and may need a parent to take care of the practical aspects of setting up a home study area. Natural or indirect lighting such as a desk light (not fluorescent) is best for learning.
4. Growing evidence suggests that T.V. viewing at this age be limited to one hour a day. It is also recommended by Child Psychologists to keep televisions and computers out of children's bedrooms.
5. A good night's sleep (at least 8 hours) is essential for optimal brain functioning at school. Middle school children (10-15 years) require as much sleep as younger children, partly because their brains are doing so much development. Students who don't get enough sleep have to work much harder to do well at school.
6. As long as it is medically safe to do so, a breakfast high in protein (think cheese, milk, bacon, eggs) promotes concentration and learning. Also, encourage your child to drink lots of water - the brain runs on it! Students who do not eat breakfast are not only likely to gain weight; they also have to work harder than others to do well at school.
7. Some exposure to computer games is good but it is important not to overdo the playing of them. The three skills needed for success at school (and in most areas of life) are concentration, memory and sequencing. Games such as Sanp, Uno, Concentration, Battleship, Monopoly, Chess and Jigsaw Puzzles all play an incredible important role in developing these skills.

## Useful Websites

[www.inyahead.com.au](http://www.inyahead.com.au)

[www.boysforward.com.au](http://www.boysforward.com.au)

## **Stage Three Curriculum**

There are six Key Learning Areas (KLA's) in the N.S.W. Primary School Curriculum. These are English, maths, human society and its environment, science and technology, creative and performing arts, P.E., Health and Personal Development. At Avoca Beach Primary School we adhere to the syllabuses set by the N.S.W. Board of Studies.

### English

The four areas of English are talking, listening, reading and writing. We devote at least two hours each day to English. Generally, English will be integrated with the topic being explored in class. Assessment is ongoing and throughout the year mandatory tasks will be set. Results and feedback from teachers will assist children in focusing on improvements.

Middle school students often lose interest in reading. Even though most will be competent readers, students at this age must develop their knowledge of complex language, plus their literal and inferential comprehension. The best way to achieve this is practise 'reading for meaning'.

Reading everyday and night Monday to Friday is essential to achieve this improvement. Parents are encouraged to read to their children incorporating discussion about the book and the language used. Introducing language that is more technical and/or subject specific is another way to assist in improving English skills.

### Maths

The maths curriculum covers five areas: number, measurement, space, data and working mathematically. Maths groups run for one hour each day.

Stage Three groups students for mathematics so teachers can best cater for the varying needs of students. Students can change groups when it is felt through teacher observation and assessment results that the present class is no longer suitable for the individual's learning needs.

The understanding and quick recall of basic facts plus the ability to calculate using the four operations are the highest priority and part of each lesson is devoted to improving these skills.

A sound understanding of these will enable students to move on to more complex tasks including problem solving.

### Human Society and Its Environment

In 2008 Stage Three students will study four topics from the N.S.W. Syllabus including Government, Bali, Rainforests and Cultural Study.

This subject involves learning about history, geography and other cultures by researching, exploring and recording.

Science will be incorporated into theme units each term.

## Technology

Each fortnight Mrs Kelly teaches the use of computers and appropriate software. The utilisation of computers is an integral part of the Stage Three program. At Avoca Beach PS there is a large variety of software that supports and enhances topics being covered in other KLA's.

## Creative and Performing Arts

This KLA covers music, art and drama. Students have the opportunity to be involved in the choir, tournament of the minds, school musical (held every second year) and dance festival. Art and drama is an integral part of the H.S.I.E. or science topic being studied.

## P.E., Health and Personal Development

P.E. (Physical Education) involves developing the skills of physical movement. Each week forty minutes are devoted to P.E. This lesson is taken by Miss Stevens. Lessons cover a specific area, eg soccer and a sequential program of skills are taught. P.E. either complements the sport being played during our Friday afternoon sports time or focuses on improving gross motor skills.

Health and Personal Development lessons focus on increasing student knowledge and understanding of living a healthy and productive lifestyle. During 2007 the Life Education Van may visit the school and Stage Three learn about the dangers related to cigarettes and alcohol. Child Protection is a mandatory component and involves informing students about appropriate relationships.

## Italian and French

The Italian and French language and culture are taught in alternate years by Mrs Fennell. These lessons add to the study in H.S.I.E. of other cultures. This is an introductory 'taste' of learning a language other than English which students may like to continue in high school.

## Daily Routine

Playground supervision begins at 9a.m. Therefore, children arriving at school before 9 a.m. are required to sit in the courtyard outside the staffroom. It is suggested at this time that the children play a quiet game, eg cards or read a book.

9.00 a.m. Play on the basketball court and top oval

On arrival at school students are to place their school bag on a hook outside their classroom. If after 9 a.m. play is allowed in stipulated areas. There is to be no loitering outside classrooms before classes begin at 9.20 a.m.

9.20 a.m. Class time begins.

10.50 a.m. Recess.

During this time students have morning tea and go to the toilet. They may play on the handball courts outside Year 2 rooms and on the basketball court and top oval.

11.10 a.m. Class time continues.

1.10 p.m. Lunch.

Stage Three students have ten minutes sitting in a designated area to eat their lunch. A healthy lunch with a drink is encouraged.

1.20 p.m. First half of playtime begins.

1.40 p.m. Second half of playtime begins.

2.00 p.m. Children visit the toilet, wash hands and have a drink.

2.05 p.m. Whole school assembly in hall.

2.15 p.m. Return to class for afternoon session of class time.

3.25 p.m. Classes dismissed.

## **Other Information**

### Absences

Legislation passed by the N.S.W. Government makes attendance at school a legal obligation until the age of fifteen. Legitimate reasons for absence from school are sickness, religious holidays or family emergency.

**All** absences are to be explained by a parent or caregiver in writing on the student's return to school.

### Assessment Tasks

Assessment of students is an ongoing process. Throughout the year more formal tasks will be set. Teachers work together to plan, mark and evaluate these tasks. If children do not complete these tasks, judging individual progress becomes more difficult. Often weeks of learning prior to the assessment task is undertaken so absences during this period will likely affect results.

### Canteen

Recess and lunch may be ordered from the school canteen. Lunch orders are to be placed before 9.20 a.m. at the front office or the canteen.

### Class Books

All exercise books are to be covered and labelled.

### Equipment for School

In the first Stage Newsletter a list of equipment necessary for school was given. It is the child's responsibility to ensure each day they are fully prepared with appropriate pens, pencils, etc needed. Student resources may need topping up at the end of each term.

### Excursions

Excursions are planned to compliment and enhance classroom learning. All students are expected to attend. Parents who are experiencing financial difficulties that would result in their child not being able to attend are asked to see Mr Whelan. Continued behaviour that contravenes school rules may result in exclusion from excursions.

### Expectations of Students

We have high expectations of our students and as teachers continue to strive to develop them intellectually, socially and emotionally.

### Hats

All students need to wear the school hat in the playground. The school has a 'No hat, play in the shade' policy. The designated shade area is beneath the under cover area outside room 6 and 7.

## Homework

At the parent teacher night the homework routine will be explained. Individual class teachers will decide consequences for incomplete homework. Parents will be notified for continued failure to complete homework, particularly assessment tasks.

## Interviews with Teachers

Teachers are always willing to discuss a child's progress with parents. It is important that classes are not interrupted so parents are requested to organise a mutually convenient time with the teacher by phoning or writing a letter requesting an interview.

## Messages with Students

On occasions it is necessary for parents to pass on messages to their child regarding arrangements related to travelling home. Parents are requested to phone the office before 3.00 p.m. and the message will be passed on.

## Newsletters

Every Monday a newsletter is given to the youngest child in each family. This newsletter provides relevant information for parents regarding present and future events.

The newsletter is also available on the school website:

[www.avocabch-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au](http://www.avocabch-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au)

At the beginning of each term all Stages detail the term's program, excursions and other information.

## Student Behaviour

All Stage Three students are aware of the behaviour acceptable at school. We reinforce that behaviour in the classroom, playground and while on excursions must be considerate, cooperative and courteous.

There are consequences for behaviour that does not adhere to this. Further information regarding this is available in a booklet titled, 'Avoca Beach School Welfare Policy'.

## Reporting to Parents

Comprehensive reports will be sent home at the end of term two and four. Student results will be based on regular assessment and teacher observation.

Parents will be contacted if children are facing regular difficulties with programmed tasks to ensure maximum communication and understanding between home and school.

Should parents wish to discuss the progress of their child in any area, we would ask that an appointment is made to organise a mutually convenient time. It is appreciated if classes are not interrupted to speak to teachers.

## School Uniform

All students are expected to wear correct school uniform. This includes black shoes. Summer uniform is worn in first and fourth terms while the winter uniform is worn in second and third terms. Sport uniform is required for P.E. and Sport days.

## Valuables

Students are requested not to bring valuable items, e.g. jewellery, camera, MP3 players, I-POD's and mobile phones to school. Teachers can not take responsibility for these items.

## 2008 Stage Three Units and Excursions

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
<b>Integrated Unit:</b> Government  <b>Excursion:</b> Canberra 1 <sup>st</sup> – 3 <sup>rd</sup> April	<b>Integrated Unit:</b> Bali	<b>Integrated Unit:</b> Rainforests	<b>Integrated Unit:</b> Cultural Study
<b>Personal Development/Health</b>  <b>A Positive Sense of Self</b>	<b>Personal Development/Health</b>  <b>Child Protection Life Education</b>	<b>Personal Development/Health</b>  <b>Good Lifestyles</b>	<b>Personal Development/Health</b>  <b>High School Transition Unit</b>

### Bookwork

- \* Write in blue pen.
- \* Rule a 1 cm margin in red pen.
- \* Rule a red line along the top line.
- \* Short date to be written on right side of the top line.
- \* Writing is to be in cursive.
- \* No texta to be used in books
- \* Coloured pencils or crayolas to be used.

### Local Excursions and School Website

At times during 2008 it may be necessary to walk the children on local excursions e.g. to Heazlett Oval for sport.  
 The occasion may also arise that photos of your child be included in displays and reports on the school website.  
 Both of these events need parental permission before they may occur. Please fill out the permission slips on the back page of this booklet to return to your child's teacher as soon as possible.

## **Materials Required**

Stage 3 teachers would like to emphasise the importance of being prepared for class work with student's stationery needs covered. It is essential that all students have their own equipment and bring it to school each day.

For class work students will require;

- \* 3 red ballpoint pens
- \* 3 blue ballpoint pens
- \* 1 black felt-tip pen for art related activities
- \* 3 HB lead pencils
- \* 1 ruler
- \* 1 gluestick
- \* 1 rubber
- \* Scissors
- \* Set of 12 coloured pencils or crayolas
- \* Set of 12 textas
- \* a pencil sharpener with container
- \* 1 geometry set which includes a set square and a protractor
- \* Pencil cases to keep belongings. (it is recommended two pencil cases are used to separate items)

Optional items include:

- \* Dictionary
- \* Thesaurus

**All items should have been labelled with name and class by Monday 11<sup>th</sup> February.**

Items can be purchased very cheaply at various discount stores and are essential to everyday classroom learning. It also allows the school to spend money on other resources.

In addition, it is expected that each child have a book for silent reading.