Beaumaris Primary School
Parent Information

Level 1 - Prep
This is an overview of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) for Level 1 (Prep) which outlines the curriculum expectations for all Prep students in Victoria.

At Beaumaris Primary School we believe in the value of children becoming life-long learners. Through our core purpose of learning together and our values of respect, resilience, relationships and responsibility we build a curriculum through utilising the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) that is relevant to the values, skills and knowledge our children will need to effectively operate within our global society. Therefore the BPS teaching and learning program is aimed at developing students who are socially and environmentally responsible, problem solvers, self directed, adaptable, ICT literate, resilient and have effective inter-personal skills.

The Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) act as a curriculum framework for Victorian schools. They are based on the best practice in Victorian schools, national and international research and widespread consultation with school communities, educators, professional associations and community groups. The Standards will provide the means for all Victorian schools to use the best curriculum thinking to better prepare students for success at school and beyond.

To succeed beyond the compulsory years of schooling, all students need to develop the capacities to:
- manage themselves as individuals and in relation to others
- understand the world in which they live; and
- act effectively in that world.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Three Strands of Learning
To ensure that the school curriculum develops students with these capacities, the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) are developed within three core, interrelated strands. The three core, interrelated strands are:
- Physical, Personal and Social Learning
- Discipline-based Learning
- Interdisciplinary Learning.

Learning Domains
Each strand has a number of components called domains. The domains describe the knowledge, skills and behaviours considered essential in the education and development of students to prepare them for further education, work and life. They also include the standards by which student achievement and progress is measured.

Within each domain, the essential knowledge, skills and behaviours are organised into dimensions. Standards are written for each dimension. However not all domains are assessed in all levels.
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Stages of Learning
The Essential Learning Standards identify three stages of learning through which students progress and recognise the differing learning needs of students at these different stages, phasing curriculum expectations and standards over six levels.

- Years Prep to 4 – Laying the foundations
- Years 5 to 8 – Building breadth and depth
- Years 9 to 10 – Developing pathways

Levels
The Victorian Essential Learning Standards include standards at six levels broadly associated with the years of schooling from Years Prep to 10 as follows:

- Level 1 – Preparatory Year
- Level 2 – Years 1 and 2
- Level 3 – Years 3 and 4
- Level 4 – Years 5 and 6
- Level 5 – Years 7 and 8
- Level 6 – Years 9 and 10.

LEVEL 1 OVERVIEW

In the Victorian Essential Learning Standards Level 1 is broadly associated with the Preparatory Year of schooling.

Learners in their first year of schooling begin to develop social skills such as understanding classroom behaviour and making connections between school and home. Through curiosity and encouragement they take an interest in learning, begin to learn basic literacy and numeracy skills and develop some simple technical and coordination skills.

Key characteristics of students at this level include:

- building a sense of belonging
- understanding classroom values and practices
- making connections between school and home
- building positive behaviours
- engaging behaviourally, emotionally and cognitively
- developing curiosity and intrinsic motivation
- expressing ideas and feelings through a variety of artistic forms
- mastering technical skills
- developing physical capacities and an awareness of their own health needs.

Students have a sense of belonging and socialise in a way where they understand and accept the values and practices of the classroom, contributing ‘to the development of positive social relationships in a range of contexts’ (Interpersonal Development). This process is aided when students feel socially and emotionally secure and are supported by their peers, teachers and family.

As students develop a sense of belonging they will be more likely to follow the rules, participate in activities and appreciate opportunities, take turns and consider the feelings of others, focus their attention for extended periods, find satisfaction and enjoyment in learning, and have enough trust to take risks such as asking and answering questions, performing in front of groups and creating novel ideas during activities. This behaviour is supported by the development of simple organisational and listening skills, and a capacity to follow instructions.
Students will spend significant time mastering technical competence by discovering how, and for what purpose, objects and systems work, and by practising tasks that include the forming of letters and numbers. They ‘recognise how sounds are represented alphabetically and identify some sound–letter relationships’ (English: Reading), and ‘count the size of small sets (collections) using the numbers 0 to 20’ (Mathematics: Number). They also begin to develop the skills of keyboarding and navigating computer systems, drawing, measuring quantities and constructing models.

Students respond to novelty and this curiosity is the basis for asking questions and developing explanations for events. They make works of art that express and communicate ideas and feelings about themselves and their world, exploring and using ‘a variety of arts elements (on their own or in combination), skills, techniques and processes, media, materials, equipment and technologies in a range of arts forms’ (The Arts: Creating and making). At times they become deeply focused and will demonstrate the capacity to avoid distraction. They are introduced to concepts like time, space, safety, feelings, location and beauty by using their personal experience, texts and their environment as a starting point for learning.

With support from their teachers, students test ideas and beliefs, identify inaccuracies and make adjustments to improve. They learn about basic patterns by identifying similarities and differences, sorting and sequencing. They learn about processes by knowing how to organise their resources and time, by understanding rules and consequences, by making comparisons, and by discussing thoughts and ideas, as well as offering explanations.

They enrich their imaginations by playing games, making links between their own experiences and the ideas in texts, by discovering difference, by interpreting and appreciating the work of others, by exploring their senses, and by sharing and participating in group projects. They also engage in a variety of physical activities and gain an appreciation of basic health needs, including the performance of ‘basic motor skills and movement patterns, with or without equipment, in a range of environments’ (Health and Physical Education: Movement and physical activity).

**ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING**

At the commencement of the school year, all prep students participate in the School Entry Assessment Tasks which have been developed for use in Victorian Government primary schools.

The tasks are designed to assist teachers in gathering information about the literacy and numeracy understandings your child has at the start of the prep year. This information will help us provide the very best programs to cater for the needs of your child.

The results of the tasks in the School Entry Assessment Kit provide a ‘snapshot’ of your child’s performance and are used solely for the purpose of planning teaching programs. The result of the assessment is, of course, confidential and will be just one part of the ongoing assessment teachers use with all students throughout their years at school.

The tasks in the kit require your child to give oral responses to a series of questions related to books, and to retell a story which has been read to them previously.

The tasks have been specifically designed for use with young children and contain an element of fun which makes them enjoyable as well as informative.
The children will also be required to give oral responses to a series of mathematical questions related to number, space and measurement. The time spent conducting an Early Numeracy Interview is invaluable in enhancing teachers’ understandings of each individual student’s mathematical understandings and the strategies they use.

Individual interviews will be conducted on Wednesdays beginning Week 2 of school through to 5th March 2009. Children will be required to be at school for one hour on one of these Wednesdays. Interview times and dates will be allocated over the first two weeks of school.

We believe the assessment tasks will further improve the excellent work of our Prep teachers in setting the foundations for literacy and numeracy learning and we look forward to your support in this important initiative.

If you have any questions regarding this assessment please contact the Prep Coordinator.

Early in Term I parents will be given the opportunity to meet with their child’s teacher to share relevant information about the child’s wellbeing and learning.

Parents will receive a formal written report of their child’s progress in June and December and parent teacher interviews will be held in June. However, parents are welcome to arrange an interview with their child’s teacher at any other time that is mutually convenient.

If a student has specific learning needs an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) will be developed. The student’s progress will then be monitored and reviewed at regular meetings during the year and the plan adjusted accordingly.

**VISUAL ARTS**

Initially the students will be acquainted with the art room so they can use the facilities safely and with confidence. The students will make and share performing and visual arts works that communicate observations, personal ideas, feelings and experiences. They explore and, with guidance, use a variety of arts elements (on their own or in combination), skills, techniques and processes, media, materials, equipment and technologies in a range of arts forms. They talk about aspects of their own arts works, and arts works and events in their community.

Emphasis is on the students finding success and approaching art with spontaneity and joy.

All students must have a clearly named art smock to wear at the commencement of the school year.

**INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY**

During ICT classes Prep Students will:

- Develop basic operating skills
- Learn to treat ICT equipment safely and appropriately
- Become familiar with keyboard and mouse functions through use of interactive software packages
- Develop skills and an understanding of toolbars and menus using a variety of software programs particularly Paint and simple multimedia packages
- Enhance their understanding and knowledge of classroom topics through ICT
**PERFORMING ARTS**

The Performing Arts program involves the students using their imagination in creating and learning about sound, expression, communication and kinaesthetic exploration. Students explore music, dance and movement as well as drama. At level 1, students create and perform work that reflects their observations, ideas, feelings and experiences. They experiment with skills, techniques and processes to develop a sense of self and identity.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

The Physical Education Program aims at providing students with knowledge, skills and behaviours to enable them to achieve a degree of autonomy in developing and maintaining their physical, mental and social health. Through the development of motor skills and movement competence, health related physical fitness and sport education it promotes the potential for lifelong participation in physical activity. Students in prep years have one lesson per week with a specialist Physical Education teacher and experience additional weekly sessions, based on “Fundamental Motor Skills” and the Perceptual Motor Program, with class teachers.

At this level students will perform basic motor skills and movement patterns and regularly engage in periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity. They follow rules and procedures and share equipment and space safely.

Students should come prepared for the program by wearing suitable clothing and footwear which may include shorts/skirts, t-shirts, runners and a school hat in summer and a tracksuit and runners during winter.

The program varies from term to term given seasonal changes. However, the following topics form the basis of the curriculum each year:

**Term 1** - Fundamental Motor Skills
Minor Games (introduction to throwing and catching)

**Term 2** - Gymnastics
Dance

**Term 3** - Fundamental Motor Skills
Minor Games

**Term 4** - Jump Rope for Heart Skipping Program
Two week intensive Swimming Program at Bayside Aquatic Centre, Mentone.

**Perceptual Motor Program (PMP)**

PMP aims to develop the child rather than the skill. It is a Perceptual Motor Program where language is the key factor in providing the perceptual knowledge about the motor experience. Some outcomes are locomotion, balance, fitness, eye/hand and eye/foot coordination, body image, body control, laterality, directionality, space awareness, body rhythm, confidence, problem solving skills, memory skills, physical education skills and language and concept development.

The Perceptual Motor Program runs once a week during Terms 2, 3 and 4. Many parent helpers are needed to be rostered on to conduct the program. A roster of volunteers is organised during Term 1.
LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH  (L.O.T.E.)
The focus of LOTE in Prep is to develop the student’s cultural awareness through learning about Japanese festivals and customs. Each year the students will have opportunities of participating in girls’ and boys’ day festivals and a biannual whole school Japanese Day. They begin to learn some basic vocabulary and sentence structures in Japanese. They also have opportunities to trace and copy Japanese hiragana and katakana writing scripts.

The students will do some language learning and be expected to:
- Listen to stories
- Participate in songs and games
- Follow simple classroom directions
- Recognise and say some numbers in Japanese
- Know basic daily greetings, eg, good morning, goodbye and good afternoon
- Write their name in katakana

Assessment in LOTE essentially relies upon participation and involvement. The teacher will observe and comment upon the following examples:
- Ability to repeat words and phrases accurately
- Ability to greet and respond to greetings from peers and teacher
- Ability to copy correctly words and phrases from classroom charts
- Effort and participation in class

LIBRARY
The aim of the library program is to foster a love and appreciation of literature. Students will listen to and discuss a range of picture storybooks to extend their understanding of the world and themselves.
- Students will become aware of the concepts of title, author and illustrator of books
- Students will be introduced to library procedures through regular borrowing and returning of books
- Students will develop a basic understanding of shelving arrangements in the library

Beaumaris Primary has a well-resourced library containing collections of fiction, non-fiction, picture fiction and reference books.

Students are encouraged to bring a library bag to help protect the books they borrow. Books can be borrowed for two weeks. Students are allowed to borrow up to two books. Students with overdue library resources are not allowed to borrow further resources. Families are expected to replace any lost books.
GENERAL INFORMATION

Starting times
Each school day starts at 9.00 am sharp and concludes at 3.30pm. The yard is supervised from 8.45 am and it is requested that students not be delivered to school prior to this time unless they are booked into Before School care. Similarly the yard is supervised until 3.45 pm and children need to be collected by this time. Children are to remain inside the school gates until they are picked up.

Punctuality and Absences
Parents are reminded that children are expected to be at school by 9.00am sharp. The arrival of children after this time can be very distracting for those who are ready to commence work.

If a child is unwell, the best place for them is at home. When a child is sick at school their parent will be notified. Consequently it is important that the emergency contact numbers are kept current. If you change your address or work number, it is imperative that you let the school know.

It is required that parents send a note to school on a child’s return explaining his or her absence. If a parent wishes to collect a child from the classroom during the day, they must first fill in an early dismissal form at the office, which is then handed to the class teacher or yard duty teacher if it is during a break. Teachers will not release a child unless they receive this form.

Naming Belongings
Please ensure that all belongings are clearly marked with your child’s name, especially hats and jackets. In this way, lost items can easily be restored to their owners.

School Uniform
It is highly recommended that students wear a Beaumaris Primary School uniform to school. This includes excursions where school uniforms make it easy to see and supervise the students. The official school hat is to be worn between the 1st September through until the 30th April. As a Sun Smart school, we have a “no hat–no play” policy. Students also need to wear appropriate shoes to school particularly on their P.E days. The school uniform is able to be purchased from school. Jewellery is to be kept to a minimum and for safety reasons, it is preferred that only stud earrings be worn. Hair that is shoulder length needs to be tied back.

Lost Property
This is a constant problem particularly with our changeable weather. It is helpful if all articles of clothing are labelled. Then they can be returned to their rightful owners. The lost property is kept in a cupboard in the corridor opposite the art room. Please leave it neat.

Lunches
The students are supervised eating their lunch for 10 minutes at the start of each lunch session. The students are encouraged to bring home any food they do not finish so you have an indication of how much they have eaten. Lunch orders are available from the school canteen Monday through to Thursdays. The canteen is closed on Fridays.
Communication

General information that concerns the whole school is published in the Stop Press which is the school newsletter, which is distributed each Thursday and is alternated with the year 6 student newspaper the Beauy News. Each Level publishes their own bulletin at the beginning of the term informing parents about what is happening in the level. Events organised by individual classes are advertised in the school newsletter and a separate note can be placed on the notice board outside the junior school or on the classroom door to inform parents about what is going on.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS – THE FIRST YEARS OF SCHOOL

Parents and teachers as partners – When a child first goes to school, there is great change for that child and for his or her family. We believe that you, the child’s parents, are a most important link in the educational chain. We have reproduced the suggestions below with the conviction that together parents and teachers can make the child’s experience of school an excellent and enjoyable one.

The better the bridge between home and school, the better the education: that’s the message of recent research. We look forward to our partnership with you, and hope that you’ll really become involved in the life of the school. We will do our best to communicate with you about what we are doing in our school and why. We will try to answer your questions as honestly and completely as we can.

Don’t underestimate your contribution – You were your child’s first teacher, and even now that he or she is entering formal education, you retain that important position.

The transition from home to school – Starting school is a big change for children. Often the hardest part is being away from the family and joining a group of other children. Anything you can do now to help will make school a happier place for your child. Here are some ways in which you can support and build on the classroom experience.

1. **Provide opportunities for shared language experience:**
   So many places to go..... the city, the zoo, the sea shore, art galleries, concerts .... So many things to do.... paint, make, cook, share and discuss. Getting ready to go or do will mean making plans, and of course there will be many recollections to be discussed afterwards.

2. **Provide opportunities for your child to spend some time away from the family:**
   This will help your child to become more independent and to build self-confidence. Why not arrange an overnight stay with Grandma, a friend or a relative? Teddy or a favourite toy should always act as chaperone! Take the time also to encourage your child to play with friends from a nearby street.

3. **Encourage Questions**
   Five and six–year–olds are full of questions about why and how. Questions are at the heart of investigating, and therefore learning. Listen to and answer these questions seriously. Parents should ask questions which require more than just a yes/no/don’t know answer. Don’t be put off when your child’s answer to “What did you do at school today?” is “Nothing”. Be more specific – ask about friends, craft, reading time, singing, games played, stories heard or “What was the best thing that happened to you today?”
4. **Encourage Children to Discover for Themselves**
   We all have to learn to take responsibility for our own learning. Young children are natural investigators. Don’t always tell them all the answers, but do provide the means for them to find their own answers. Much problem-solving is learned through play. Child psychologist Jean Piaget said that ‘play is the child’s work.’ Encourage active, imaginative play through dressing up, playing shop or mothers-and-fathers or school. A special messy place, such as a veranda or rumpus room, will help here.

5. **Share Reading Experiences**
   At age five and six the bedtime story is as important as ever. After the bedtime story, allow some quiet moments for reading in bed. Share new stories and poems, perhaps borrowed from the local library, and rediscover the fun of old favourites. If in doubt about which books to choose, ask your librarian or your child’s teacher to recommend some.

6. **Encourage Drawing and Writing at Home**
   When is a child ready to begin to draw and write? As soon as he or she is able to hold a crayon. Out of the scribble will eventually emerge pictures and words. Keep on hand a store of pencils, paper, paint, crayons, cardboard, safety scissors, etc. Show your child how to hold the writing implement correctly; habits begin early.

7. **Sometimes Scribe for Your Child**
   Write down a story (statement) as your child tells it, then read it back several times. Display the ‘story’ for the whole family to share, on the wall, notice-board or fridge.

8. **Put TV Viewing in its Proper Perspective**
   Most children enjoy watching TV but they also need time for playing, reading, being out of doors – time for doing lots of things. Choose carefully what and how much your child watches on television. Sometimes ask questions about the program.

9. **Ensure that Your Child Has a Good Knowledge of the Route to and from School**
   Could your child find his or her own way home, if necessary? Can he or she say his or her name and address clearly? Knowing their phone number is also very important. Learning these things can be made into a game – there is no need for pressure or drills.

10. **Teach Your Child Basic Road Safety**
    Every child should have a basic understanding of road signs and road crossing procedures.

11. **Get to Know Your Child’s Teacher as a Friend Whom You and Your Child Both Share**
    The benefits of a good relationship between teacher and parent are obvious. Don’t hesitate to communicate with the teacher as you see the need, before confusion arises or problems develop.

12. **Support Children in What They Do at School**
    Display at home art and craft done at school, as well as stories written. Help children find things to take for school activities or themes – ‘make–and–do’ boxes, objects for the Science table, clothes and objects for dress up and imaginative play.
Following is the Victorian Cursive Script.

If children are writing at home, please encourage use of this script at all times. It is also very important that they hold their pencil correctly, so check for correct grip frequently.

Indicates starting point and \( \rightarrow \) indicates direction.

**Lower-case letters**

```
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
```

**Upper-case letters**

```
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
```

**Upper-case letters (for left-handers)**

```
AEFHT
```

**Numerals**

```
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
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