Philosophical Basis:
At Doncaster Gardens Primary School, our curriculum is based on the combined Australian Curriculum (still in development) and the Victorian Essential Learning Standards, together known as AusVELS, as required by the Department Of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD). This is strongly supported by a range of other programs and strategies that we employ across the various levels of schooling, and in some cases, the whole school. All students have the opportunity to, and are expected to participate in all areas of the core curriculum, unless there are circumstances where such participation would be inappropriate. In addition there are some specialised elective programs offered which are not included in the core curriculum, and which generally incur an extra cost.

Guidelines:

AusVELS Strands | Learning Domains
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Physical, Personal & Social Learning | Civics & Citizenship
 | Health & Physical Education
 | Interpersonal Development
 | Personal Learning

Discipline-Based Learning | English
 | Mathematics
 | Science
 | Humanities (History, Geography, Economics)
 | The Arts
 | Languages

Inter-Disciplinary Learning | Communication
 | Design, Creativity & Technology
 | Thinking Processes
 | Information & Communication Technology (ICT)

- The provision of the school’s curriculum will be arranged so that each class has a two-session Literacy block (incorporating reading, writing, speaking and listening) and a one-session Numeracy block each day. Learning Domains such as Science, Humanities, Civics and Citizenship and Health will be taught through our Inquiry Units, where a content focus will be selected from one or more of the disciplinary domains each term. Interdisciplinary and Interpersonal Domains will feature throughout all Inquiry Units.
- Strong emphasis will be placed upon the subject areas of English, Mathematics and Interpersonal Learning. Proficiency and skills in these areas are the keys to other subject areas, and are the very basic necessities that children need to open the doors to develop whatever personal talents and interests they discover within themselves.
- We will support the learner by providing learning opportunities that are rigorous and relevant, rich in assessment, personalised and explicit. Our learning environments are collaborative, secure and safe, and inquiry focused. Core knowledge, skills and understandings will be developed through thinking, communicating and working collaboratively.

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We will endeavour to engage the learner in the contemporary world by developing deep understanding about the self, others and the world, building relationships and contributing to the community. Students will engage with contemporary learning tools, including Information & Communication Technologies (ICTs). We will provide opportunities for students to become reflective thinkers and develop an understanding of themselves as a learner.

We will provide opportunities to help the children gain in personal confidence, self-esteem and respect for their peers, through the creation of learning situations where children can recognise talent and ability in themselves and others. Teachers will use ongoing assessment to identify each individual student’s ‘points of need’, and target their teaching accordingly to take him/her to the next stage in learning.

Implementation:

**ENGLISH**

- Literacy competence is the foundation for effective learning.
- Literacy programs will enhance the Literacy learning of all students to ensure that all students make progress and achieve success in Literacy from Foundation to Year 6.
- The emphasis will be on a balanced approach to the teaching of Reading, Writing and Speaking & Listening.
- The Early Years Literacy Program will be implemented in Foundation to Year 4, based on the two-session daily Literacy block.
- Teachers will make extensive use of structured classroom observations in order to establish starting points for teaching and to monitor student progress.

**MATHEMATICS**

- All students need to progress through phases in their mathematical learning if they are to be successful.
- A daily one-session Numeracy block will consist of whole-class, group and individual tasks that are ‘differentiated’ to cater for different levels of understanding in Mathematics.
- Ongoing and regular assessments are used to inform teaching as an integral part of the Mathematics program.
- Rich ‘open-ended tasks’ will be provided so that students fully explore mathematical concepts, allowing them opportunities to deepen their understanding while applying a range of skills and thinking strategies.
- Real life mathematical situations will be provided in order for students to make the connections between what they learn at school and their experiences of the world around them.
- Students will be provided with opportunities to share their ideas and thinking, giving them opportunities to explain concepts, develop understanding and learn from each other.

**READING RECOVERY**

- Reading Recovery is an early intervention reading program, designed to assist the learning of individual students so that they can participate fully in classroom activities.
- It is a highly recommended one to one tutoring program for students experiencing literacy difficulties after one year of school.
- The Reading Recovery teacher provides an individual program in half hourly sessions each day of the week for each student in the program.
- As well as improving the reading and writing skills of students who are experiencing difficulty it develops independence.
- Reading Recovery has high expectations in that it is premised on bringing the lowest achieving students up to the level of the average student in class within 12-20 weeks.
- The Reading Recovery program will be offered if a suitably trained teacher is available, and the program can be resourced.
SPECIALIST PROGRAMS

Physical Education
- The school emphasises the importance of Physical Education and sport in the total education of the child.
- Each week the students will participate in a specialist Physical Education lesson as well as a Sports/PMP/FMS session with the classroom teacher, depending on the year level of the class.
- The Physical Education lessons deal primarily with the development of gross motor skills and hand eye coordination.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
- In order to utilise ICT as a tool for learning, students need to be explicitly taught the skills necessary to access information and to communicate effectively.
- Each class from Foundation to Year 6 will have a specialist Information and Communications Technology (ICT) class each week with a specialist teacher.
- The ICT teacher will ensure that Cybersafety is integrated into all areas of the ICT program, and that the students are constantly reminded of the importance of staying safe online.

Languages
- In the global environment that we live in today, learning a second language is a valuable skill for all students. Chinese (Mandarin) will be offered to students from Foundation to Year 6.

The Arts
- The Arts are valued as unique, expressive, creative and communicative forms that engage students in critical and creative thinking, and help them understand themselves and the world.
- Students will undertake specialist classes in Performing Arts and Visual Art each week.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Inter-School Sport
- Doncaster Gardens Primary School is a member of the Victorian Primary Schools Sports Association.
- Students in Years 5 and 6 will have opportunities to participate in district cross country, swimming and athletic carnivals, as well as regular interschool summer and winter sports.

Swimming and Water Safety
- Students from Foundation – Year 4 will have the opportunity to participate in an intensive ‘Learn to Swim’ program which takes place every day over two weeks.

School Choir and Orchestra
- Students in Years 4-6 will have opportunities to become members of the school choir and orchestra.
- Rehearsals will take place once a week, and the choir and orchestra will represent the school at different events throughout the year.

School Production
- Every second year, all students will participate in either the Junior or Senior School Production, involving acting, singing and dancing.
- Years 5 and 6 students will be able to audition for major roles in the production, with each class performing a separate item based on a selected theme.

Lunch Time Clubs
- Opportunities for students to be involved in different lunchtime clubs will be offered throughout the year, to provide enrichment across the curriculum.
- These clubs may include Chess Club, Lego Club, Art/Craft Club and Open Library.

School Camps
- Students from Years 3-6 will be provided with the opportunity to participate in an Outdoor Education program every second year, giving the students the chance to develop their social skills and independence.

Evaluation:
- This policy will be reviewed every three years as part of the policy review cycle, or more often if changes in the DEECD curriculum policies occur.

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