



Hunter Valley
Grammar School

Year Six

Parent Information Evening

2019

Welcome Parents

Welcome to Hunter Valley Grammar School and to the Year Six community. Each of you is as important in this community as your children. We are excited to be in partnership with you this year and are grateful for the opportunity to work with your children.

Communication

To work in partnership with us throughout the year, can we please stress that communication between the classroom and home is essential. We will endeavour to make you aware of any important matters that arise at school. In turn, we ask you to do the same for any matters that arise at home. If circumstances change in your child's life that you believe may have an effect on their behaviour in the classroom, please make us aware so we can respond accordingly. Furthermore, if your child comes home unhappy about a particular incident at school, please contact us so we can get a clear understanding and take appropriate action.

There are a number of ways you can contact us at school:

- We are available via our school email addresses (listed at the conclusion of this document)
- Phone messages can be left at the Junior School Office with Mrs Robyn Kephart;
- The School Diary

Formal communication by way of interviews occurs in Terms 1 and 3. In Term 1, students, teachers and parents are involved in **Three Way Conferences** where the students lead a discussion with their parents about their progress, learning goals and share specific work samples. In Term 3, **Student-Led Conferences** are conducted where students take their parents through the learning process, sharing various learning experiences, inquiries and critical thinking.

Formal Reports are distributed to parents at the end of Terms 2 and 4. This is accompanied by the **Student Portfolios**; a record of the learning that the students have engaged in throughout the year. The Portfolio contains a range of work samples which may include draft and working documents, planning sheets, published tasks, collaborative group work, notetaking, personal and group inquiries and photographs of

various learning experiences. Students are responsible for collating and maintaining their Portfolio throughout the year, choosing samples of work they are most proud of and would like to share.

Grade Newsletters are distributed electronically in Weeks 3, 6 and 9 of each term. These aim to inform you of the learning that has been occurring within the grade, important dates and general reminders for parents, carers and students.

Learning Culture

Responsibility, independence and accountability will be underlying themes across Year 6 in 2019. **Responsible** and respectful students are mindful that others may have a different opinion to them, they listen to what others contribute and they share their thoughts in the safe environment that our classrooms will be. They are responsible for themselves, their actions, their learning and their belongings. **Independent** students remember what they need each day, they take messages between home and school for parents and teachers and they can regulate their own learning. Independent students are proactive in completing tasks that are expected. They show initiative and independence for their learning. **Accountable** students understand that their actions cause other events to occur and they consider these events before making decisions. Accountable students take responsibility for the choices they make and maintain honest and sincere relationships.

In addition, **curiosity** will play an integral part of the learning in Year 6. Through provocations sparking interest, explicit and purposeful teacher questioning, stimulating resources and student led inquiries, students will be encouraged to develop and share their curious minds with their peers. It is this curiosity that will drive the learning within our classrooms.

1:1 Devices in Year 6

In 2019, all Year 6 students will be provided with **ACER laptops**. These devices will be kept at school and remain the property of Hunter Valley Grammar School. Office 365 will become an integral tool used regularly with students in Year 6. Specifically, OneNote will be a platform for collaboration among peers, sharing of resources from teachers to students, storage of information such as Homework, learning

experiences and work samples. It will form a digital record of the interactions within our classrooms and due to its accessible nature (online), feel free to engage with this platform with your child at any time.

Mobile Phones

We understand that students in Year 6 may bring a mobile phone to school for personal use outside of school hours. This may be used before 8am or after 3pm to make necessary contact with parents and carers. Students wishing to use their phone for an emergency may do so with the permission of their classroom teacher and in the presence of the teacher. Please be reminded that the normal channel of communication with your child is through the Junior School Office.

Flexible Learning Spaces

You will notice that the learning spaces created in our Year 6 classrooms are unique, creative and flexible, much like our learners. Desks on wheels, lap desks, ottomans, bean bags, cushions and outdoor seating all form part of the learning environment for students in Year 6. Students can decide which environment best suits them and we are able to create a space that promotes effective learning, collaboration and inquiry.

Timetable

Students have been given a timetable of the specialist lessons scheduled for their class. All other lessons are at the discretion of classroom teachers. Please be aware of the days which your child is required to wear their Sports Uniform for Sport and PE.

It is expected that all students **arrive at school before 8:25am** (when the bell rings) at which time they report to their classroom. Many important routines, messages and administrative tasks are completed at this time and it is imperative that your child is present so that they know what is happening.

The school day ends at 2:50pm. There are set areas for students to be at this time.

- After School Care
- The Weeks Library – for personal study/quiet reading
- Waiters – if parents are parking and collecting students

- Drop Off Zone – in the supervised area, near the pencils
- Bus lines – Year 6 students can independently take themselves to bus lines
- Co-curricular activities – these start at 3:15pm. All students are to wait in the COA area, seated behind the flag indicating their activity

Stage 3 students are not permitted to wait unsupervised on the school grounds.

Uniform

Our School's expectations around uniform and hairstyles aim to reduce any pressure on our students to 'compete' for the most fashionable styles, or to feel left-out because of a family's choice not to go for the latest trend. As a School, we aim to set a standard of which can all be proud and which brings credit to students, parents and the School.

Please refer to the Student Diary for specific information regarding the School Uniform.

In Year 6, students are reminded that:

- Dress hats are to be worn to and from school on days they are wearing their School uniform
- Sports hats are to be worn to and from school on days they are wearing their Sports uniform
- There is an expectation that all students have a Sports hat for Sport and PE
- On Sport Days, students must wear their navy polo shirt to school and change into their coloured house shirts for Sport. Students must then change into their navy polo shirt after Sport. A negative incident will be recorded if students do not reliably bring their coloured house shirt.
- On PE Days, students must wear their navy polo shirt to school and remain in this uniform for the duration of the day

All boys' hair must be cut in a conventional style, clear of the collar and off the eyes at all times. Hair styles which do not adhere to this include those with marked, immediate variations in the hair length and drastically asymmetric styles, where hair is significantly longer on one side. All girls' hair must be pinned or tied back so that it is not impeding sight, and hair that touches the shoulders is to be tied back. Hair is not to be coloured or include highlights

- Girls should ensure their school dress is of an appropriate length

Home-learning

Please refer to the Student Diary for specific information regarding Home-learning.

In Year 6, Home-learning is communicated to students via the **OneNote** class notebook. Home-learning tasks will require students to practise a range of Literacy and Numeracy skills, as well inquiry. Home-learning aims to consolidate the learning that takes place within the classroom, promote curiosity and instil positive work habits for students in their final year in the Junior School. Home-learning may also take a 'flipped learning' approach, whereby the students engage in the learning/acquisition of skills or knowledge at home and be ready to use these skills or knowledge in the classroom setting. It is hoped that students in Year 6 have access to the internet and a device at home to access their OneNote and online material such as Mathletics and Typing Tournament. Please advise your child's teacher if this is not the case.

Curriculum

At Hunter Valley Grammar School, teachers use the New South Wales Board of Studies Curriculum which prescribes the teaching and learning experiences we provide for our students. In addition, we are an IB World School, accredited to implement the Primary Years Program for students in Pre-school to Year 6. As a result, the non-core subjects are taught in an integrated manner across six Units of Inquiry.

The Primary Years Program (PYP)

The Primary Years Program (PYP) is a framework to explore the Australian Curriculum and the NSW Board of Studies teaching and learning guidelines.

The program is designed for students from age 3 to 12 and provides the knowledge, concepts, skills personal attributes and the capacity to take action, all of which younger students need to equip them for successful lives, both now and in the future.

The PYP framework allows HVGS staff to design an engaging transdisciplinary curriculum, meaning that it focuses on issues that go across, between and beyond subject areas.

With a focus on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, the PYP is designed to support each students' academic needs and their social and emotional well-being. The PYP aims to encourage students to develop independence and to take responsibility for their own learning and help students to establish personal values.

In the PYP curriculum, teachers monitor, document, measure and provide feedback on student learning. Learning is viewed as a continuous journey, where teachers identify students' needs and use ongoing assessment and feedback to plan the next stage of their learning.

Learning in the PYP is underpinned by six transdisciplinary themes, each selected for their relevance to the real world. Students explore the commonalities of human experience and investigate these themes in what teachers call a programme of inquiry. These six PYP themes puts students at the centre of the learning process.

Who we are

Inquiry into the nature of the self; beliefs and values; person, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; and human relationships.

Where we are in place and time

Inquiry into our orientation in place and time; personal histories; the discoveries and explorations of humankind; and the interconnectedness of individuals and civilizations.

How we express ourselves

Inquiry into the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values.

How the world works

Inquiry into the natural world and its laws, the interaction between the natural world and human societies; the impact of scientific and technological advances on society and on the environment.

How we organise ourselves

Inquiry into the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the structure and function of organisations; and their impact on humankind and the environment.

Sharing the planet

Inquiry into rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and other living things; access to equal opportunities; and peace and conflict resolution.

Class teachers are responsible for teaching English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, History and Geography. **Specialist teachers** are responsible for teaching PD/H/PE, Languages Other Than English (French), Visual Arts and Music. (The names of the 2019 specialist teachers can be found at the end of this document)

English

In Year 6, teaching and learning is very much integrated with the Units of Inquiry. English textual concepts will drive the Program and these will help to promote critical thinking and deep understanding of the content covered.

There is a focus on quality literature in Stage 3. Students will use the literature to learn grammar, punctuation, vocabulary, text structure, purpose and audience. The texts will also inform the types of writing that the students compose. Each text will be written for a purpose – persuasive, informative, imaginative. In addition, students will engage with and respond to the literature using reflection and critical thought. The TEEL method (Topic sentence, Explain, Expand, Link) will be used as a framework when the students respond to texts. Comprehension skills are imperative during these responses.

By Stage 3, it is expected that students have an automatic, fluent and legible handwriting style. Students will use this style to compose their own texts.

Typing Tournament is a specific touch-typing program that Hunter Valley Grammar School subscribes to. All students in Year 6 will regularly practise their touch-typing skills using this program.

Students will learn dependable spelling skills by blending the phonemic, morphemic and whole word approaches. Teacher directions will be provided explicitly according to the students' skill progression. Students will be able to efficiently and effectively apply spelling skills, developing into proficient writers.

Students in Stage 3 are expected to read regularly for enjoyment. This will be supported by repeated readings in class to improve fluency, access to complementary texts which accompany our Units, as well as Literacy Pro (online texts offered under the School's subscription).

Both formal and informal speaking and listening opportunities will be provided in context throughout the year.

Mathematics

Mathematical skills and concepts are taught explicitly in Year 6. Skills and processes are explored through a variety of inquiries which provide opportunities for real world application and deep understanding. Students are encouraged to develop a range of strategies to problem solve and communicate reasoning. It is expected in Year 6 that all students are able to recall multiplication facts in sequence and randomly.

Units of Inquiry

Students will engage with learning under the six transdisciplinary themes which are characteristic of the Primary Years Program. Units begin with Year 6 teachers provoking curiosity and activating prior knowledge. Students are immersed into a range of stimulus and experiences, before exploring and identifying local, national and global issues through a conceptual lens. As a result, students use a variety of primary and secondary sources to gather information and knowledge. Their understanding is demonstrated through the creation and sharing of formative and summative tasks. Evaluation and reflection form an imperative part of the inquiry process. Students are responsible for creating their own success criteria in collaboration with peers and their teachers.

Junior School PYP Exhibition

The culmination of learning in the Primary Years Program is the Junior School Exhibition. Students identify, investigate and offer solutions to real life issues through personal inquiry. It provides students the opportunity to demonstrate independence and responsibility for their own learning and exhibit attributes of the Learner Profile. Students, teachers and parents are united in a collaborative experience that incorporates the essential elements of the PYP.

Subject Specialist Lessons

Visual Arts – Mrs Natalie Spindler-Grebert

Welcome to the 2019 school year. I am very excited to be teaching Visual Arts to all students from K-6 at HVGS in specialised, fortnightly Visual Arts lessons. The Visual Arts provide opportunities for students to

develop creativity, motor skills, confidence and perseverance through art making and art appreciation tasks. Across each Stage, I will be working with students to continue developing their technical skills and creative thinking. A range of techniques will be explored across the Stages, including processes such as drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture and textiles. Each of these experiences will have direct links to the IB Units of Inquiry.

Students will document their studies in a Visual Arts book. Kindergarten students and students who are new to the school will need to purchase an A4 Visual Arts Diary. Visual Arts Diaries are spiral bound and have high quality blank pages. They are readily available in stores such as Big W, K Mart and Target. You can also find them in Dollar King, Newsagents, Officeworks and various Art stores. It is anticipated that students will be able to document several years of work in the one diary. Please try to avoid purchasing larger Scrapbooks or Art Diaries that are A3 in size.

PD/H/PE – Mr Ross Murdoch

Personal Development, Health and Physical Education is an extremely important area of the curriculum. Studies suggest that without vigorous exercise, children's performances in class do suffer. When children exercise the brain releases neurotrophic factor which stimulates the growth of new neurons. All this points to exercise assisting cognitive function! To assist in this our PE component will address Striking Skills, Fundamental Movement Skills, Dance, Gymnastics and Invasion games both Field and Court. In the theory component we address Safety, Personal Choices, Healthy Choices, Movement and Growth and Development. No matter what level of physical ability in practical components a child may be presenting at, it is our aim for them to show some improvement in skill level. I'm very much looking forward to teaching Year 6 this year in PDHPE.

Languages Other Than English (French) – Mademoiselle Kenisha Redman

In French Year 6 students will be exposed to authentic French language through songs, videos and articles. Our classroom environment is engaging and interactive, and learning opportunities are tailored to individual needs. Learning French aligns with our PYP philosophy and by encouraging cooperative, respectful and appreciative behaviour, the students at the Hunter Valley Grammar School gain a deeper understanding and respect for languages and cultures within our global communities. Students will explore

a range of topics that build on prior knowledge and improve communication skills. Some of these include restaurant manners and interactions, around town and admirable French citizens.

Music – Mrs Sara Cutler

Music is part of our Creative Arts program at HVGS allowing students the opportunity to develop a continuum of fundamental skills in singing, moving and playing. In Year 6, students expand upon and inquire more deeply into the musical concepts with a focus on learning to read, interpret and create musical scores using a variety of notes and instrumentation. Students learn about the role and organisation of rhythm, melody and harmony in music. Singing is an integral part of Music as students learn to work collaboratively and creatively. They are also introduced to keyboard, guitar and digital technologies, developing their creativity and collaborative skills along with individual performance opportunities. Making connections with the Units of Inquiry is also a key focus with students exploring musical concepts in a practical setting. Participating in grade and stage-based items for special events is always an enriching experience for all students involved, forming another major part of our Junior School Music Program at HVGS.

Library – Mrs Lyn Pritchard and Mrs Rebecca Crawley

HVGS has two libraries. The K-2 Library caters for Preschool to Year 2 and the Weeks' Library caters for students in Years 3-12. The Weeks Library is open for Junior School students in Years 4,5 and 6 until 4:00pm from Monday to Friday. Students using the Library after school experience a structured environment where they can complete homework or read independently. Any attendees must complete the co-curricula enrolment form and abide by the terms and conditions.

The K-2 Library is open on Monday and Friday mornings from 8:00 – 8:25am for parents/guardians to bring their children to borrow and discuss suitable titles for their children with a Teacher Librarian.

Staff - Our staff is comprised of two Library Technicians (Jayde Moore 0.6 FTE and Terena Vanderzee 1.0 FTE) and four Teacher Librarians; Lyn Pritchard (Primary Teacher Librarian), Ingrid Coates (Primary Teacher Librarian), Kylie Lawrence and Rebecca Crawley.

Roles - The technicians facilitate Library operations and the Teacher Librarians collaboratively with all classroom teachers to develop and teach units of work. The role of the Teacher Librarians is to support the development of Information and Digital Literacy, all curriculum, teaching and learning, whilst instilling a passion for literature and lifelong learning. In 2019 this includes supporting the explicit teaching of skills collaboratively with classroom teachers, as well as promoting Literacy Pro. The HVGS Library team encourage students to participate in a range of events, competitions and activities including (but not limited to) the NSW Premiers Reading Challenge, coding clubs, STEM clubs, book clubs, knitting club, chess and board games.

Camps and Excursions

In Term 1, Year 6 students attend a 3day/2night camp at the **Active Education Forster** site in Term 1. The camp is aimed at developing positive relationships among the students. We ask them to be courageous in their approach to various activities and be independent whilst away from their parents and carers.

In Term 3, Year 6 students attend a 3day/2night excursion to **Canberra**. This excursion supports the learning across two of the Transdisciplinary Themes. Various sites of interest are visited such as the Parliament House, Questacon, National Portrait Gallery and the War Memorial, to name a few. The Canberra excursion is at the cost of the student.

Premier's Reading Challenge

The Challenge aims to encourage a love of reading for leisure and pleasure in students, and to enable them to experience quality literature. It is not a competition but a challenge to each student to read, to read more and to read more widely. The Premier's Reading Challenge (PRC) is available for all NSW students in Kindergarten to Year 9, in all school settings. The 2019 Challenge kicks off on Monday 4 March and closes Friday 30 August (midnight) for students. It is a wonderful initiative and we hope that every student in Year 6 will be up for the challenge!

Crunch and Sip

Students in Year 6 are encouraged to bring a piece of fruit or vegetable to eat during the morning session each day. This is used as a 'brain break' and a time to refuel their bodies and minds. A water bottle can be brought into classrooms to ensure students are hydrated.

In Conclusion

We thank you in advance for the support that you will provide your child this year. Year 6 is a significant time in the lives of your children and as it is the final year of Junior School, it is imperative that a positive, supportive and rich partnership is maintained to ensure our students reach their full potential. When students face challenges, or experience difficulty in their life, they need a support network that they can rely on in order to overcome these. It is hoped that together we will be able to provide this support.

Sincerely,

Rachael Hutchen, Samantha Ducey, Victoria Picken and Katy Bragg

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Other contacts you may require:

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