



# Bethal Primary School

## INQUIRY POLICY

### PURPOSE

Students learn best when they are engaged and connected to their learning. An inquiry-based approach to learning provides the opportunity for student centred learning that creates enthusiasm, excitement and curiosity for the topic of inquiry. Following the e5 Instructional Model as an inquiry learning approach, develops in students the lifelong skills of critical and creative thinking, problem-solving skills, questioning, reasoning and perseverance. As students investigate the world around them through an inquiry topic, they are instilled with a passion to become lifelong learners, always seeking to find out about the world around them and apply their new learning to different contexts.

### AIMS

The Inquiry program at Bethal Primary School aims to ensure that students:

- Develop a sense of curiosity and connection to the world around them
- Develop the transferable skills of critical and creative thinking, planning, self-management, organisation, communication and collaboration
- Develop the agency to take greater responsibility for their learning
- Develop perseverance and problem-solving skills
- Take risks in their learning and understand failure is part of the problem-solving process
- Develop the ability to pose and investigate questions related to real life context – planning, researching, investigating and searching for answers and solutions
- Develop the ability to gather and analyse information from a range of different sources and apply this information and learning to new situations
- Understand that there are multiple perspectives for looking at, analysing and understanding the world around them
- Are prepared for learning beyond the school context and can apply their learning to their own lives

### POLICY

- One inquiry unit will be taught per term for each year level across the school
- Teachers will provide a minimum of 2 hours of inquiry lessons per week, and where possible, incorporate further learning into the key learning areas of Literacy and Numeracy
- As part of each inquiry unit, all students will study a sequential Science, Humanities, Civics and Citizenship, Economics and Business, Digital Technologies, Design and Technologies and Critical and Creative Thinking curriculum based upon the content descriptors contained within the Victorian Curriculum

- Where possible, Specialist teachers will find opportunities to link inquiry units to their subject areas
- Parents will be notified of inquiry topics at the beginning of term so that there are opportunities for parents to engage in the learning at home
- Teachers will use MAPPEN, Primary Connections and other resources from the Victorian Curriculum to select the inquiry topics for each term and plan each inquiry unit of work
- Inquiry units of work will be planned based on a two-year inquiry cycle
- Teachers will plan the structure of inquiry lessons and units of work based on the e5 Instructional Model
- Inquiry lessons and units of work planned will be linked to relevant real-life contexts and relate to students' existing knowledge and experiences
- Student voice is valued as part of the inquiry process and student-led questions will help develop inquiry lessons and units of work
- Teachers will guide students and model methods of researching and the checking of information to support student learning
- Reflection time will be incorporated as a key part of inquiry lessons, allowing students to think back on what they have done, how they feel about what they have learnt and what they could learn more about or approach differently
- Term and weekly planning for Inquiry will reflect all aspects of Bethal PS's planning and curriculum documents
- Data will be analysed at a PLC and individual level, used to inform planning and differentiation
- All teachers will differentiate the curriculum to meet students learning needs, including providing intervention and extension programs where possible
- Student progress is monitored using formal and informal assessments according to the yearly 'Assessment and Reporting Schedule'
- Summative assessment tasks will be implemented to enable students to create and present what they have learned; ensuring students understand their content and can communicate it effectively
- Teachers will have an inquiry display in their room which displays the 'big ideas' of the inquiry topic and Tier Words (topic specific vocabulary)
- Teacher capacity will be continuously developed through participation in evidence-based professional learning
- The Science Specialist or Inquiry Leader will coordinate Inquiry learning across the school and manage the Inquiry budget.

### e5 Instructional Model

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Elaboration</b>
Engage	The teacher fosters positive relations with and between students and develops shared expectations for learning and interacting. They stimulate interest and curiosity, promote questioning and connect learning to real world experiences. The teacher structures tasks, elicits students' prior knowledge and supports them to make connections to past learning experiences. They present a purpose for learning, determining challenging learning goals and making assessment and performance requirements clear. The teacher assists students to consider and identify processes that will support the achievement of the learning goals.

Explore	The teacher presents challenging tasks to support students to generate and investigate questions, gather relevant information and develop ideas. They provide tools and procedures for students to organise information and ideas. The teacher identifies students' conceptions and challenges misconceptions. They assist students to expand their perspectives and reflect on their learning. The teacher is mindful of the learning requirements of the task, attentive to student responses and intervenes accordingly.
Explain	The teacher provides opportunities for students to demonstrate their current level of understanding through verbal and non-verbal means. They explicitly teach relevant knowledge, concepts and skills. This content is represented in multiple ways. The teacher provides strategies to enable students to connect and organise new and existing knowledge. They assist students to represent their ideas, using language and images to engage them in reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing. The teacher explicitly teaches the language of the discipline. They progressively assess students' understanding and structure opportunities for students to practise new skills.
Elaborate	The teacher engages students in dialogue, continuously extending and refining students' understanding. They support students to identify and define relationships between concepts and to generate principles or rules. The teacher selects contexts from familiar to unfamiliar, which progressively build the students' ability to transfer and generalise their learning. The teacher supports students to create and test hypotheses and to make and justify decisions. They monitor student understanding, providing explicit feedback, and adjusting instruction accordingly.
Evaluate	The teacher supports students to continuously refine and improve their work using assessment criteria in preparation for a performance of understanding. They integrate evidence from each phase, formally recording students' progress against learning goals. The teacher provides feedback and assists students to evaluate their progress and achievements. They support students to reflect on their learning processes and the impact of effort on achievement. The teacher guides students to identify future learning goals.

***Department of Education and Early Childhood Development – June 2018***

#### **MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

- [The e5 instructional model \(education.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.education.vic.gov.au)
- [e5a1poster.pdf \(education.vic.gov.au\)](#)
- [Linking science with literacy | Primary Connections](#)
- [MAPPEN Curriculum and Professional Learning \(getmappen.com\)](https://www.getmappen.com/)
- [Home - Victorian Curriculum \(vcaa.vic.edu.au\)](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/)

#### **REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION**

This policy was last updated on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2021 and is scheduled for review in 2024.