Rationale

The world is changing and students today require highly developed skills in order to become successful citizens of tomorrow. The ability to think effectively in all situations is paramount to each students’ potential to succeed and to prosper in an ever changing information rich and increasingly interactive world. The key learning domains of Science, Thinking, Interpersonal & Personal learning, Health, Humanities, Civics and Citizenship & ICT are the principle host areas for developing pathways for inquiries, whilst the process areas of English, Maths and the Arts are used to organise, sort, represent and present ideas and discoveries. The integrated curriculum encourages students to access and process ideas in different ways and provides a connected learning experience.

Aims

- For students to develop within themselves, the abilities to think effectively and to make positive choices based upon sound thinking practices.
- To provide rich and relevant learning experiences for all students based on an authentic, integrated ‘real life’ curriculum.
- Use the inquiry process to plan investigations, analyse data, and form conclusions supported by evidence.
- Acquire and use the skills of scientific investigation, reasoning and analysis to ask questions and seek solutions.
- Develop scientific attributes such as flexibility, curiosity, critical reflection, respect for evidence and ethical considerations.
- Be able to interpret and communicate ideas effectively.
- Clarify values and attitudes about issues affecting society and the environment, with respect for cultural diversity.
- Participate in activities that enhance community life, particularly in making decisions about civic projects and in ways of achieving ecologically sustainable development.
- Use information technology to support learning about the inquiry focus and in investigating and communicating ideas.

Implementation

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• All students at WPS will take part in Integrated Inquiries, based upon the outcomes contained within The Victorian Essential Learning Standards domains.

• A VELS based scope and sequence outlining a two year cycle of inquiries will be developed for each year level with the exception of Level 1 (Prep) who complete many smaller inquiries in the prep year.

• These inquiries will be developed in a manner that encourages and provides opportunities for students to develop the skills to think systematically, to reason, to think laterally and creatively, and to think in a caring, ethical and reflective way.

• Learning activities will be characteristically open-ended, based upon and developing multiple intelligences and thinking skills as well as promoting cooperative learning strategies.

• Learning experiences will be planned to be challenging, engaging, and involve practical ‘hands-on’ activities and first-hand encounters wherever practicable.

• Students will be encouraged to be active contributors to their own learning, through taking part in assessment strategies such as peer assessment, rubrics, self reflections and identification for future learnings.

• Study of Inquiry units will be integrated across the curriculum and where possible be a minimum of two hours per week.

• A budget that provides for the needs of the integrated curriculum will be developed by staff and resourced through the global budget.

• Thinking routines are documented, introduced and regularly used across all curriculum areas.

• A staff member will be allocated the responsibility of co-ordinating the school Integrated Studies program and budget.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three year review cycle.