Curriculum in the JUNIOR SCHOOL Handbook
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CGGS VISION

Canberra Girls Grammar School aims to be an example of educational excellence by:

- delivering outstanding academic, pastoral and co-curricular programs
- recruiting, developing and retaining high quality staff
- building a caring, inclusive and nurturing school community
- providing new ways of learning in an innovative, progressive and responsive educational environment.

WHAT IS THE PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME (PYP)?

The Primary Years Programme (PYP) is a curriculum framework designed by the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) for students aged 3 to 12. It focuses on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both in the classroom and in the world outside. Each year, six transdisciplinary themes of global significance are explored, using knowledge and skills derived from subject areas, with a powerful emphasis on inquiry-based learning.

The PYP framework is used to engage with the content and skills of the Australia Curriculum, thereby creating a relevant, engaging, challenging and significant educational experience for all children.
IB MISSION STATEMENT

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end, the organisation works with schools, governments and international organisations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

THE PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME AT CGGS JUNIOR SCHOOL

In October 2007, CGGS became a candidate school for the Primary Years Programme. This marked the beginning of the journey towards becoming an authorised IB World School. In August, 2010, CGGS underwent the pre-authorisation process and in August, 2011, the CGGS Junior School became an authorised IB World School with the programme conducted from Reception to Year 6. In 2015 the School undertook a successful programme evaluation which is both a requirement and a service provided by the IB to IB World Schools. The aim of evaluation is for the IB to ensure that the standards and practices of the programmes are being maintained. The next evaluation process will occur in 2020.

As an authorised IB World School, all School leadership and teaching staff are required to undertake IB training and regularly attend professional learning workshops and events to ensure that teaching, learning and curriculum are aligned with current national and international standards.

Further information on all IBO programmes is available at www.ibo.org
THE CGGS LEARNER PROFILE

The philosophy of the Primary Years Programme, as it directly affects the child, is expressed in a series of desired attributes and traits. Learners at Canberra Girls Grammar School strive to be:

Inquirers: We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

Knowledgeable: We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

Thinkers: We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators: We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

Principled: We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

Open-Minded: We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring: We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

Risk-takers: We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

Balanced: We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives – intellectual, physical and emotional – to achieve well-being for ourselves and
others. We recognise our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

Reflective: We thoughtfully consider our world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF THE PYP

The PYP provides a comprehensive curriculum framework expressed through three interrelated questions:

1. What do we want to learn?
2. How best will we learn?
3. How will we know what we have learned?

The programme is comprised of essential elements (knowledge, concepts, skills, dispositions and action) which provide the framework for structured and purposeful inquiry.
Knowledge: What do we want our students to know about?

Learning at CGGS is designed to encourage curiosity in a transdisciplinary way. Subject knowledge is integrated using six transdisciplinary themes which provide the framework for the exploration of knowledge, and which underpin our programme of inquiry. Teachers and students are guided by these themes, in conjunction with the Australian Curriculum, often in ways that transcend conventional subject boundaries. Students from Year 1 to Year 6 engage in six units of inquiry each year, while ELC and Preparatory students engage in four units of inquiry. All inquiries fall under each of these transdisciplinary themes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who we are</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry into the nature of the self; beliefs and values; person, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities, and cultures; rights and responsibilities; what it means to be human.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Where we are in place and time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry into orientation in place and time; personal histories; homes and journeys; the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; the relationship between and the interconnectedness of individuals and civilizations, from local and global perspectives.</td>
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<tr>
<th>How we express ourselves</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry into the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values; the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity; our appreciation of the aesthetic.</td>
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<tr>
<th>How the world works</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry into the natural world and its laws, the interaction between the natural world (physical and biological) and human societies; how humans use their understanding of scientific principles; the impact of scientific and technological advances on society and on the environment.</td>
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<th>How we organise ourselves</th>
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<tr>
<td>Inquiry into the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the structure and function of organisations; societal decision-making; economic activities and their impact on humankind and the environment.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Sharing the planet</th>
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<tr>
<td>Inquiry into rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and other living things; communities and the relationship within and between them; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.</td>
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Concepts: What do we want our students to understand?

Eight fundamental concepts, expressed as key questions, propel the process of inquiry and help to encourage a transdisciplinary perspective. The eight concepts which drive the units of inquiry are:

- **Form** What is it like?
- **Function** How does it work?
- **Causation** Why is it like it is?
- **Change** How is it changing?
- **Connection** How is it connected to other things?
- **Perspective** What are the points of view?
- **Responsibility** What is our responsibility?
- **Reflection** How do we know?

Skills: What do we want our students to be able to do?

Within their learning throughout the programme of inquiry, students acquire and apply a set of transdisciplinary skills: social skills, communication skills, thinking skills, research skills, and self-management skills. These skills are valuable, not only in the units of inquiry, but also for any teaching and learning that occurs within the school, and in life outside the school.

Actions: How do we want our students to act?

Students are encouraged to reflect, to make informed choices and to take self-initiated and voluntary action that will help their peers, families, school and the wider community.
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are a significant and valued component of the teaching and learning process and are acknowledged as the prime educators of their children, a responsibility shared with teachers. The School encourages active involvement by parents in School life by providing numerous opportunities throughout the year to participate in events. Some of the ways parents can be involved in the classroom are:

- Guest speaking: you may be able to share your profession, special skills, interests and family cultures with our students during units of inquiry

- Reading and Maths rotations: teachers greatly appreciate having parents assist either one on one or in a small group setting with reading and maths, especially in the Junior Primary classrooms

- Excursions: helping with supervision on unit of inquiry related excursions where needed is a valuable help

Please note that a Working with Vulnerable People card must be held by all adults working or volunteering with children. The cards and background checks are free for volunteers and application forms can be found at https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/1804
**LANGUAGE: ENGLISH**

The study of English is central to the learning and development of all students. It helps to create confident communicators, imaginative thinkers and informed citizens. It is through the study of English that students learn to analyse, understand, communicate and build relationships with others and with the world around them. At CGGS, the language of instruction and inquiry is English. The three strands of Language are divided into Speaking and Listening, Reading, and Writing. Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) skills are embedded throughout the entire program.

At CGGS our Language program aims to ensure students learn to listen to, read, view, speak, write, create and reflect on increasingly complex and sophisticated spoken, written and multimodal texts. Students are encouraged to appreciate, enjoy and use the English language in all its variations and develop a sense of its richness and power to evoke feelings, convey information, form ideas, facilitate interaction with others, entertain, persuade and argue. Students develop an understanding of how Standard Australian English works in its spoken and written forms and in combination with non-linguistic forms of communication to create meaning.

At CGGS, the language program is enriched through co-curricular activities including Debating and Public Speaking, Rostrum and Tournament of Minds.

**Additional Language: French**

At CGGS, all students study French as a language additional to the language of instruction. All primary students have two lessons per week and Junior Primary Students have one lesson per week. Students in Pre-Preparatory also have a short, informal session once a week from Semester 2.

CGGS implements the highly successful French/Canadian Accelerated Integrated Method (AIM) program in Years 3 to 6 which uses gestures, immersion and music as the main language acquisition method. The AIM program used in Years 3 to 6 is verb-based rather than noun-based and is an immersion program. Only French is spoken in the classroom so as to provide situations where students have to speak French and cannot fall back on English. This method is characterised by gestures, which embed the meanings of the words.
In the Junior Primary years, the students follow a noun-based program where they learn vocabulary that is related to topic-based questions. The program is characterised by a spiral curriculum with topics that are introduced in Preparatory being built upon in Years 1 and 2. Elements of the AIM program are also used.

**MATHEMATICS**

The Mathematics curriculum at CGGS is guided by the Australian Curriculum and is implemented within the philosophy of the PYP in which appropriate mathematical concepts are taught within a transdisciplinary approach and integrated, where possible, into units of inquiry.

In Mathematics, it is intended that students become competent users of the language of mathematics and begin to use it as a way of thinking, rather than an isolated set of skills. It is important that students acquire mathematical understanding by constructing their own meaning, through ever-increasing levels of abstraction; at CGGS, Mathematics is taught in relevant and realistic contexts.

At CGGS our Mathematics program aims to ensure that students are confident, creative users and communicators of mathematics, able to investigate, represent and interpret situations as active citizens. Students develop an increasingly sophisticated understanding of mathematical concepts and fluency with processes, and are able to pose and solve problems and reason in *Number and Algebra*, *Measurement and Geometry*, and *Statistics and Probability*. Students are encouraged to recognise connections between the areas of Mathematics and other disciplines and appreciate Mathematics as an accessible and enjoyable discipline to study.

At CGGS the Mathematics program is enriched through a variety of academic Mathematics competitions and challenges. Furthermore, there are many opportunities for both extension and support for students.
The Australian Curriculum has developed three interrelated Science strands: Science Understanding, Science as a Human Endeavour and Science Inquiry Skills. Together, the three strands of the Science curriculum provide students with understanding, knowledge and skills through which they can develop a scientific view of the world. Students are challenged to explore the nature, concepts and uses of science through clearly described inquiry processes.

The Science Understanding strand comprises four sub-strands: biological sciences, chemical sciences, earth and space sciences and physical sciences. At CGGS the four strands are explored each year, both within the transdisciplinary units of inquiry and in some stand-alone Science units. A hands-on approach is taken to the learning of Science, in order to engage students’ curiosity, draw on prior knowledge and construct their own meaning.

The content in the Science as a Human Endeavour strand is described in two-year bands. There are two sub-strands of Science as a Human Endeavour. The first, nature and development of science, develops an appreciation of the unique nature of science and scientific knowledge, including how current knowledge has developed over time through the actions of many people.

The second sub-strand is use and influence of science. This sub-strand explores how science knowledge and applications affect people’s lives, including their work, and how science is influenced by society and can be used to inform decisions and actions.

The strand Science Inquiry Skills involves identifying and posing questions; planning, conducting and reflecting on investigations; processing, analysing and interpreting evidence; and communicating findings. This strand is concerned with evaluating claims, investigating ideas, solving problems, drawing valid conclusions and developing evidence-based arguments.

At CGGS the four strands are explored each year, both within the
transdisciplinary units of inquiry and in some stand-alone Science units. A hands-on approach is taken to the learning of Science, in order to engage students’ curiosity, draw on prior knowledge and construct their own meaning.

**HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

The Humanities and Social Sciences are the study of human behaviour and interaction in social, cultural, environmental, economic and political contexts.

In the Australian Curriculum, the Humanities and Social Sciences learning area comprises four subjects: History, Geography, Economics and Business (Years 5 and 6), Civics and Citizenship (Years 3 to 6). Although these subjects are considered separately, in practice they are inextricably linked. Students are made aware of the inevitable links to other areas of the curriculum in order to understand the interconnected nature of the subject areas with one another and with the PYP transdisciplinary themes.

Through studying Humanities and Social Sciences, students will develop the ability to question, think critically, solve problems, communicate effectively, make decisions and adapt to change. Thinking about and responding to issues requires an understanding of the key historical, geographical, political, economic and societal factors involved, and how these different factors interrelate.

The Humanities and Social Sciences subjects are taught through the six transdisciplinary themes.
THE ARTS

At CGGS, learning in the Arts encompasses Music, Dance, Drama, Visual and Media Arts. Arts inquiry in a PYP classroom takes place in an environment that stimulates and challenges students. Students draw on a wide range of stimuli: the creative works of professional artists, contemporary and historical works, music, artwork, dance and stories. Learning in these areas may be integrated into general classroom programs and/or taught by specialist teachers and through the co-curricular program.

At CGGS Drama includes the development of creative skills, verbal and non-verbal expression, an awareness of the perspective of others and aesthetic appreciation. Students have opportunities to work cooperatively and experience situation from different viewpoints. Drama is primarily taught through integration with units of inquiry and some specialist programs in Preparatory to Year 6.

The music component of the curriculum includes the study and exploration of sound and the expressive use of musical elements. Students participate in musical activities using voice, body and instruments to develop concepts about sound and musical awareness. Dance is also implemented through parts of the Music and Personal, Social and Physical Education programs. Music is taught primarily by specialist teachers in the ELC, Junior Primary and Primary years and dance is taught by both Music and PSPE staff.

The Visual Arts CGGS program includes the development of creative skills, verbal and non-verbal expression, an awareness of the perspectives of others and aesthetic appreciation. In the ELC and Junior Primary years, the Visual Arts are taught by the classroom teacher. However, the specialist art teacher conducts an Artist in Residence program in conjunction with the classroom teacher in the Junior Primary section of the school each week. In Years 3-6, the students have Visual Arts lessons under the guidance of a specialist art teacher.
The **media arts** component of the curriculum includes the development of skills to use existing and emerging technologies to explore imagery, text and sound. The media arts are primarily taught through integration with other parts of the classroom program.

Further opportunities for students to develop their skills in the Arts are available in our extensive co-curricular program which includes drama and musical productions, instrumental groups, choirs, public speaking, debating, dance and art clubs.
PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

At CGGS, Personal, Social and Physical Education (PSPE) takes place within the Pastoral Care and the Physical Education and Health programs. Learning in this area may occur within general classroom programs and/or taught in specialist classrooms and the co-curricular program. The specialist teachers may integrate with or support a unit within the program of inquiry as well as carry out subject-specific skills based teaching.

PSPE is concerned with the development of knowledge, attitudes and skills related to personal, social and physical well-being in order to make healthy lifestyle choices. It is also concerned with the ongoing development and growth of the individual with respect to feelings, beliefs and behaviours and how they interrelate. It also considers the interaction of the individual within the family, school, community, society and world at large. It provides a framework and vocabulary with which students can build relationships with peers and adults as well as make connections and develop values and beliefs.

Physical education is concerned with the development of movement skills, through which students can increase confidence and cooperative skills, and come to understand the role of physical education in a healthy lifestyle.
RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

Religion and Philosophy is a key learning area in the curriculum structure of CGGS as an Anglican school. It is an essential part of the Christian education program which is the total life of the school and which is expressed through the culture of the school, all the teaching and learning experiences, the worship program, and the pastoral care and behaviour management policies and practices.

Learning in this area takes place under the guidance of specialist teachers and the School Chaplain, with all teachers supporting learning in this area. The Religion and Philosophy program is integrated with units of inquiry where appropriate. The curriculum is based on a five-strand approach developed by Dr Peter Vardy, a University of London-based philosopher. The five strands include a study of the Bible and the Christian tradition; ethics and values education; philosophy of religion; a study of world religions; and an affective strand that teaches stillness and silence.

All students participate in the Religion and Philosophy program although many children have different faith and spiritual backgrounds. Within the Religion and Philosophy program and the overall life of the school, the different faiths and cultures represented in the school are acknowledged and celebrated.
LIBRARY AND RESOURCE CENTRE

The Library and Resource Centre (LRC) is the hub of learning resources in the school. The implementation, maintenance and growth of all key learning areas and their transdisciplinary links as expressed through the units of inquiry, are supported by the LRC. Students are also encouraged to fully utilise the Library for personal investigation, study and recreation.

The Library and Resource Centre aims to:

• provide a wide variety of print, visual, auditory and electronic resources of appropriate levels to support curriculum;
• provide up-to-date information technology facilities and familiarise staff and students with its use;
• teach staff and students to use the resources efficiently;
• enhance intercultural awareness through the provision of materials reflecting different cultures and languages;
• provide an environment which promotes enthusiasm for learning, reading and relaxation;
• provide suitable materials which will develop reading skills and promote enthusiasm for reading and literature;
• develop the abilities of the students so that they will become skilful, independent users of information;
• develop a sense of responsibility in students in relation to use of materials and appropriate use of materials.

The Library and Resource Centre staff consult extensively with teachers to plan units of inquiry and provide suitable materials. They also arrange a variety of enrichment experiences in the form of author and book illustrator workshops.
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

At CGGS Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is not a subject but a tool and mode of learning that is used to enhance learning across all curriculum areas. Students at CGGS are encouraged to be creative, innovative and enterprising when using traditional, contemporary and emerging technologies, and understand how technologies have developed over time. Students are provided with learning experiences across the curriculum where they engage confidently with appropriate technologies – materials, data, systems, components, tools and equipment – when designing and creating solutions.

At CGGS, students have access to a wide range of technology appropriate to the year level. CGGS has implemented a compulsory Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program in Year 6 and a voluntary program for Years 4 and 5. Devices are used under teacher supervision in the same way school computer use is supervised. The Technologies part of the Australian Curriculum (Design & Technology and Digital Technologies) is integrated into appropriate units of inquiry. The Innovation Space provides students with the space and materials to tinker, code, film and create.
ACADEMIC NEEDS

At CGGS, the primary focus of the Academic Needs Team is to assist students to access the mainstream classroom curriculum. The Academic Needs Team consists of academic needs teachers, the school psychologist, the English as an Additional Language (EAL/D) teacher and the Junior School Management Team.

The Academic Needs program consists of literacy and numeracy remediation, English as an Additional Language/Dialect and extension and enrichment. Students may also access programs such as speech therapy and occupational therapy which are provided by external specialists.

Students are identified through classroom assessment, special purpose individual or group testing or other avenues such as reports from external specialists. These students are referred to the Academic Needs Team to determine how resources may be allocated. The Academic Needs Team also works closely with the classroom teachers to design necessary modifications to programs for those students with particular difficulties.

Remediation support is allocated based on need, and students are regularly reviewed to manage the support team’s case load. Support is offered individually, or in small groups and support teachers may work within the classroom or withdraw the students for short periods. The programs for some students may be designed in collaboration with outside special staff such as speech therapists and occupational therapists.

Extension and enrichment is offered through the differentiated classroom and single-subject programs. There are also many opportunities for extension and enrichment through the extensive co-curricular programs offered at CGGS. These accommodate interest and talent in a variety of academic areas, creative areas, music and physical pursuits.
ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

In line with our school and the IB mission statements, assessment and reporting at CGGS is challenging, enriching, supportive and is an integral part of teaching and learning. Assessment is designed to inform practice and thoughtfully and effectively guide students through the five essential elements of learning: the acquisition of knowledge, understanding of concepts, mastering of skills, development of attitudes, and decision to take action, as identified by the PYP. Our key objective at CGGS is to provide students with feedback on the learning process in order to improve learning and performance and to develop deep understanding. CGGS aims to encourage and support students in their development of the CGGS Learner Profile attributes.

At CGGS, we assess student performance and progress based upon clear and explicit criteria across all curriculum areas. We also collect evidence about other essential elements of the programme such as the Learner Profile and the Transdisciplinary Skills. Assessment is both formative and summative and viewed as authentic, essential, rich, and engaging. Assessment encourages students to be active participants in the learning process.

Formative assessment is interwoven with daily learning and provides teachers with information which informs and can be used to plan the next stage of learning. Formative assessment helps teachers find out what students already know and can do. Through formative assessment, teachers encourage and promote learning by giving regular and frequent feedback in order to help students engage in thoughtful reflection and recognise the criteria for success.

Summative assessment occurs at the culmination of the teaching and learning process and aims to give teachers, students and parents, when applicable, clear insight into students’ understandings. Through summative assessment, students have the opportunity to demonstrate what has been learned.
CGGS promotes the use of a range and balance of school-based assessment and reporting techniques that will accommodate a wide range of ages, abilities and learning styles. Students participate in a variety of standardised assessments at certain points during the school year.
REFERENCES

International Baccalaureate Organisation: Pedagogical Leadership in a PYP School. 2007
International Baccalaureate Organisation Mission Statement
www.acara.edu.au for current Australian Curriculum documentation