



Reporting to Parents 18.5.17

New look for 2017

The Department of Education and Training has provided all Victorian government schools with new guidelines for curriculum planning and reporting. This is mainly in response to the new Victorian Curriculum that all schools are mandated to implement from this year. There is no longer a mandated report format or reporting system for government schools to use. We at Apollo have been planning for these changes for the past couple of years and have been planning and developing our inquiry based units in line with the Victorian Curriculum. These units were developed by our staff in 2015, trialled in 2016 and then updated ready for full implementation this year. They are based on the Victorian Curriculum and utilise an inquiry approach to learning to capitalise on the natural curiosity of our students. With these developments, we are well positioned to report against the new Victorian Curriculum this year.

Over many years however, our parent opinion survey results have illustrated a dissatisfaction with our reporting process. We felt it timely, with the new guidelines, to address this issue and have utilised the parents on the Planning and Development sub-committee and School Council as our focus groups. Over the past several months, the parents on these committees have reviewed our current reporting process and provided feedback to address this dissatisfaction. We have consulted with our teaching staff to gain their views and in an effort to make the process effective for all stakeholders we have made some changes that will be implemented this year. Over the next few weeks, I will highlight different aspects of the new reporting process so our school community is well informed of the changes.

This week's focus is the **Student Centred Conferences**.

In the past, all children have presented their portfolio of work to their parent/carer at their Student Centred Conference. These have been an opportunity for parents to look at work samples and hear their child explain their learning and achievement. These conferences provide samples of work that support the teacher's judgement and comments in the student's report. While the classroom teacher has been present, the focus has been on the child. Some of the feedback contained in the parent opinion survey comments has indicated that parents have found their participation in this conference somewhat lacking. Whilst they value the opportunity to listen to their child, they feel that the opportunity for them to also participate should be given. Another area of concern was that the student report was not provided to parents prior to this conference, which they believed prevented them from receiving the whole picture of their child's performance and achievement.

Through much discussion with staff and the parents in our focus groups the following will be implemented this year.

- Student centred conferences will now be known as **Student Learning Conversations**. This change is to signal the move towards a more interactive discussion that enables the student, teacher and parent to participate in a conversation about the child's progress and achievement. The emphasis and focus will still be on the child however, more interaction from both the teacher and the parent is anticipated.
- The student portfolio will be shared and referred to by the child during this conversation. It is however, likely to contain more pieces than those that are highlighted/shared by the child at the Student Learning Conversation and it is very important that parents take the time to sit down with their child afterwards and go through all of the remaining work samples.
- Students in Prep – Grade 4 will continue to use a hard copy portfolio while Grade 5 and 6 students will create a digital portfolio using their iPad.
- The student report will be provided to parents prior to the Student Learning Conversation to enable a richer conversation to occur.

- Parents are strongly encouraged to provide feedback to their child about their progress and achievement after the Student Learning Conversation has occurred and once all samples have been shared at home. In the past the mechanism for this has been our 'two stars and a wish' document however there may be some changes to this template and approach as teachers are currently reviewing this feedback mechanism. Whatever format is decided information about its completion will be contained in your child's portfolio.

Information about your child's Student Learning Conversation will be coming out soon, so please ensure you book your time to participate in these very important conversations with your child and their teacher.

The following links are provided for you to access more information about

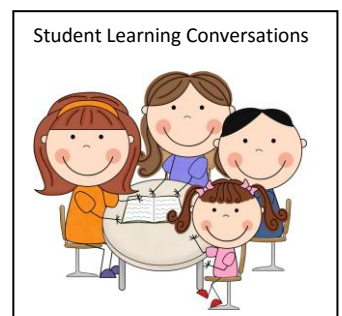
- Our school's inquiry based learning units (curriculum section of our grade information booklets) <http://www.apolloparkps.vic.edu.au/gradeinformationbooks/>
- Victorian curriculum <http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/>
- Information for parents about student reporting <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/primary/Pages/reportcards.aspx>

Thank you

Keren Barro

Assistant Principal

NEXT WEEK'S TOPIC – Student reports – changes to our new format



QUESTIONS

If you have any questions about this week's information please write your question in the space below and return it to school with your child by Monday 22nd May or email your question to

apollo.parkways.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au

Please write the following in the subject line of your email - Keren Barro student report question

Question/s about Student Learning Conversations: Please return to Mrs Keren Barro



Reporting to Parents 25.5.17

New report format for 2017

This week's focus is **student reports and the development process**

As you will know from last week's edition, the Department of Education and Training has provided all Victorian government schools with new guidelines for curriculum planning and reporting. There is no longer a mandated report format for government schools to use. This means we are now able to develop a format that meets the needs of our teachers and our parents and best summarises the achievement and progress of our students. To do this we have utilised feedback from our Parent Opinion Survey and the parents on the Planning and Development sub-committee and School Council to gain insight into what aspects of our student reports they found most effective.

These parent focus groups began by looking at our current reporting format that was developed by the Department and mandated for use in all government schools. The feedback below was gathered during these discussion groups and has been utilised to guide the development of our new report format.

- The curriculum statements describing what had been undertaken by all children in the classroom were not particularly useful. Many said they did not read them and simply skimmed over them until they found their child's name (our teachers provided these descriptions as they felt they gave a context for the comments that followed about the child's achievement). It was suggested that parents could read the grade information booklet that is on the school website if they wanted this information. They could also go to the VCAA website via the link provided in grade information booklets to get more information about the Victorian Curriculum and what is taught at each year level.
- The report was difficult to read as there was a lot of information about all the learning areas in one long text. They did not like the one paragraph style and would prefer this information to be broken up in some way.
- The entire page of achievement dots, where all learning areas were listed in one table was quite overwhelming and they felt these should be broken up and matched to the comments relevant to that learning area.
- The level of achievement shown by the dot was important and they also liked knowing where their child's achievement was in relation to the expected standard, however they did not feel the rating (A B C D E) was as important. These grades mean different things at secondary schools and meant different things when parents attended school to what they mean now and this created confusion.
- The 'what the school will do' section was superfluous as they know and trust that the teachers will teach the children and therefore this contained information that was unnecessary and not at very useful to parents.
- The 'what you can do at home' section was not very useful and they would prefer that the teacher put more specific information in the 'future learning' section.
- The 'future learning section' was extremely beneficial and they would prefer teachers put more specific information into this section as this would help the parent know what to assist their child with.
- The 'work habits and behaviour' sections were very informative and they liked to know this information about their child.
- The comments from the specialist teachers were very valuable but again, the parents did not want to read the curriculum information here. They were also interested to know how their child was behaving and the effort they were making in these programs.

Based on this feedback and by looking at some report formats from other schools we then developed some draft formats. These formats were based on the feedback from our parent focus groups and were shared with our staff who provided their feedback on these suggested changes.

It is important to remember that while the intended audience for the report is the parent, the report is written by the teacher and needs to be formatted to enable the teacher to say what they need to about the student. The report needs to be effective for both the teacher and the parent and ultimately for the continuation of the child's learning.

In most areas the staff were in agreement with the changes suggested by the parents and they felt the draft layout was effective. They could see that it was clearer and easier to read and that linking all the information about the one learning, are together. The achievement dot, the written comment and then the future learning, would make it much easier to understand. They were given the opportunity to generate ideas about the drafts and these were then used to develop our new format.

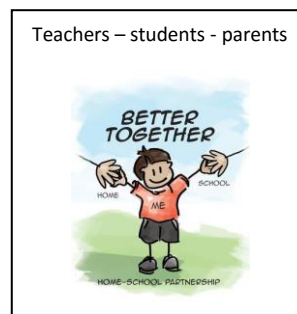
The following links are provided for you to access more information about

- The teaching and learning program provided at each level of the school
<http://www.apolloparkps.vic.edu.au/gradeinformationbooks/>
- Victorian curriculum <http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/>
- Information for parents about student reporting
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/primary/Pages/reportcards.aspx>

Thank you

Keren Barro

Assistant Principal



NEXT WEEK'S TOPIC – a look at the new format.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions about this week's information please write your question in the space below and return it to school with your child by Monday 29th May or email your question to

apollo.parkways.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au

Please write the following in the subject line of your email - Keren Barro student report question

Question/s about student reports: Please return to Mrs Keren Barro



Reporting to Parents 1.6.17

New report format for 2017

This week's focus is a **look at the new layout of our student reports**

As a result of the feedback we gained from our parent focus groups and our staff, our reports will have a new layout as we endeavour to make it easier for parents to read all of the information that our teachers provide. We have moved away from the one page of achievement dots and the one page of information and brought these two aspects together and added future learning statements in the following learning areas.

English

- Reading and Viewing
- Writing
- Speaking and Listening

Mathematics

- Number and Algebra
- Measurement and Geometry & Statistics and Probability

Here is an example of the new layout

Reading and Viewing					
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Reading and Viewing Achievement Level				•	
Progress and Achievement					
Future Learning					

Measurement and Geometry & Statistics and Probability				
	Towards Foundation	Foundation	Level 1	Level 2
Measurement and Geometry Achievement Level				
Statistics and Probability Achievement Level				
Progress and Achievement				
Future Learning				

Parents are then receiving written comments outlining their child's progress and achievement for the two inquiry based units undertaken in the semester. Achievement levels (based on the state-wide Victorian Curriculum achievement standards) for the relevant learning areas are also provided. These learning areas vary depending on the year level of the child and the focus of the inquiry based units. Here is an example of the set up for the Grade 3 inquiry based units.

Classroom teachers will provide a general comment at the beginning of the report and a judgement for the student's effort and behaviour. A common school wide five-point scale is used to measure effort and behaviour. The five terms seen on the scale below, have been defined by our staff and the definitions are also displayed on the report.



Information about your child's attendance will also be entered into the report so you are able to see the number of days your child has been absent from school.

Our Specialist Programs will be reported on under the following headings.

- Languages – Italian
- Physical Education
- The Arts – Music
- The Arts – Visual Arts

A written comment for progress and achievement will be provided along with a judgement for effort. An achievement level (based on state wide Victorian Curriculum achievement standards) will be provided for the year levels stipulated in Department of Education and Training (DET) assessment and reporting guidelines.

Languages - Italian		Mrs Celeste LICASTRO				
Learning Area	Achievement Levels	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8
Italian						

Work Habits	Needs Attention	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Effort					

Progress and Achievement

Inquiry Based Units					
Term 1: How Can I Make a Contribution?					
An inquiry into local community the groups we can belong to and the opportunities citizens have to make a contribution to others.					
Progress and Achievement					
Term 2: How Does It Grow?					
A scientific inquiry into living things both plants and animals and their needs for survival.					
Progress and Achievement					
Learning Area	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Civics and Citizenship			●		
Science			●		
Digital Technologies				●	

At the moment our teachers are very busy, hard at work writing reports for all of the children that they teach. This is a huge undertaking and they pride themselves in the quality of the information they provide to you. They are also finalising assessments and assisting their students to prepare their portfolios in readiness for the Student Learning Conversations.

The following links are provided for you to access more information about:

- The teaching and learning program provided at each level of the school
<http://www.apolloparkps.vic.edu.au/gradeinformationbooks/>
- Victorian curriculum <http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/>
- Information for parents about student reporting
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/primary/Pages/reportcards.aspx>

Thank you

Keren Barro

Assistant Principal

NEXT WEEK'S TOPIC – explanation of the scales and achievement levels

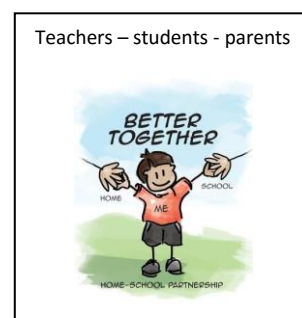
QUESTIONS

If you have any questions about this week's information please write your question in the space below and return it to school with your child by Monday 5th June or email your question to

apollo.parkways.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au

Please write the following in the subject line of your email - Keren Barro student report question

Question/s about student reports: Please return to Mrs Keren Barro





Reporting to Parents 8.6.17

New report format for 2017

This week's focus is an **explanation of the scales in our new student reports**

Last week we shared the new look of our report. We believe we have achieved our aim and the report has a clearer layout and is much easier to read in terms of both the graphics and the comments.

The DET guidelines state that we must use a 5 point scale on our reports and we have done this to describe student behaviour and effort. The classroom teacher provides a judgement on both of these areas while the specialist teacher provides a judgement for effort.



The whole staff developed descriptors for the words used in the scale and these are what they use to measure both effort and behaviour. This is the rubric which is also included in your child's report.

Legend – Effort and Behaviour

	Needs Attention	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Effort	Consistently requires teacher assistance to remain focused and complete set tasks to the best of their ability.	Frequently requires teacher support to remain focused and complete set tasks to the best of their ability.	At times requires additional support to remain focused and complete set tasks to the best of their ability.	On most occasions, remains focused and completes set tasks to the best of their ability. Responds positively to teacher suggestions for improvement. Uses their initiative to support their learning.	Consistently remains focused and completes set tasks to the best of their ability. Responds positively to teacher suggestions for improvement. Uses their initiative to support and challenge their learning.
Behaviour	Consistently requires assistance to cooperate with teacher instructions and peers and to interact appropriately with others. Behaviour can cause disruption to their own learning and that of others.	Frequently requires support to follow teacher instructions, established classroom routines and the school rules and values (5Cs)	At times requires additional direction to follow teacher instructions, established classroom routines and the school rules and values (5Cs).	On most occasions follows teacher instructions, established classroom routines and the school rules and values (5Cs). They are a role model to other students.	Consistently follows teacher instructions, established classroom routines and the school rules and values (5Cs). They are an excellent role model to other students.

The guidelines state that we must provide a level of achievement against the Victorian Curriculum achievement standards that also shows the expected level of achievement for children of a similar age and grade level. The way we are showing this is on a graphic, an example of which is below.

Learning Area	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
Visual Arts			●		

The key to this graphic is also included in your child's report.

Understanding your child's report

- Your child's achievement
- Expected level of achievement at your child's year level

Also included in this section is the key for graphic that shows your child's level of achievement against the Victorian Curriculum Standards.

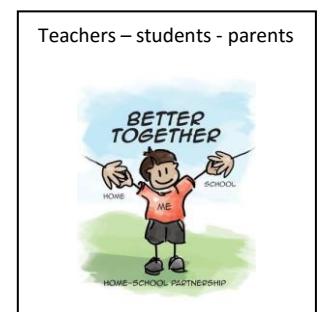
The levels correspond directly to grade levels. The only time the terminology is different is for Prep where the Victorian Curriculum refers to their level as Foundation. We are using the word 'level' as this is the terminology of the Victorian Curriculum. It is understood that children may be demonstrating achievement at higher or lower levels than the particular grade level they are in. Teachers are aware of this and plan programs to meet the needs of all children with the goal being to teach the child what they next need to learn, in order to keep them progressing along the continuum. This is why the expected level for your child is in the centre of the scale and levels above and below are provided. This indicates where on the continuum of learning they are. The fact that the level expected is at the centre also indicates they are on target if the blue dot is shown on the right edge of the band. Achievement at this level shows your child is progressing as expected at this time of the year in their particular grade level.

The green band on the scale shows the expected level of children in that year level. This band is equivalent to 6 months in time so if the dot were shown on the left edge of the band then it would indicate that while not outside the range of expected level they are at the beginning of it. The levels indicate a time frame of 12 months so when the blue dot is beyond the level that corresponds to your child's grade level then this is indicative that they demonstrate skills and understandings that enable them to work with the curriculum at a higher level. Again teachers are very aware of this and plan programs to cater for these needs in their classroom on a daily basis.

Thank you

Keren Barro

Assistant Principal



If you have any questions about this week's information please email your question to school by Monday 12th June.

apollo.parkways.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au

Please write the following in the subject line of your email - Keren Barro student report question.



Reporting to Parents 15.6.17

New report format for 2017

This week's focus is **learning areas and how and when they are reported.**

When you receive your child's report you will also receive a letter briefly explaining the new report format and the new approach we will be implementing for our Student Learning Conversations. Hopefully the information that has been provided through our newsletter over the last four weeks will enable you to easily read and understand your child's report.

Today's information is about reporting on the learning areas and how these differ at different year levels and in different semesters. English and mathematics are reported on each semester at each year level from Prep – Grade 6. The subjects that are the focus of our Inquiry based units are reported on when they are taught as part of our teaching and learning program. This means that in one semester you may see some learning areas while in the second semester you will see others. There are also reporting requirements that need to be met requiring some subjects to be reported on only once a year so where these are in place the semester two report will include these judgments as we endeavour to provide consistency across our school.

The technicalities of all of this and how it relates to our school program have been carefully considered and we have ensured that we are reporting on the learning areas as we are required. The year level and stage of schooling are also factors as the reporting requirements differ between Prep – Grade 2 and Grade 3 – Grade 6. This acknowledges that the complexity of the learning and teaching program increases as children move through the school.

For those who have children in Grade 1 – Grade 6 there will be no progress dots shown that enable you to see your child's growth from last year to this year as we have moved to the Victorian Curriculum. The department guidelines state that progress cannot be shown in this reporting period as comparison cannot be made from the AusVELS curriculum to the Victorian Curriculum. This semester your child's report will show their achievement level as a blue dot and the expected level of achievement at your child's grade level as a green band. (see example below)

Learning Area	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
Visual Arts			●		

You will also notice when you receive your child's report that all of our specialist programs are included and the specialist teachers have provided a written comment about your child's progress and achievement and a judgment on their effort. They have also indicated their level of achievement (see example above) the only exemption to this is our Languages program – Italian. There is no level of achievement graphic for children who are in Prep – Grade 2 as the Department only requires this to be reported from Grade 3. This is a change as in the past reporting the level of achievement commenced from Grade 5, so it is now implemented in Grade 3 and 4 as well.

If you notice that learning areas are not included in your child's report this is not an oversight on our behalf, this is our adherence to the guidelines and our school's planned approach to consistent reporting.

We will be seeking your feedback about our new report format via a survey. We really need all of our parents to take the time to complete this so we are able to evaluate our new reports and begin working on those for the second semester. Information about this survey will be provided to you in

next week's newsletter and it will also include some questions about our Student Learning Conversations that we also wish to gain feedback on.

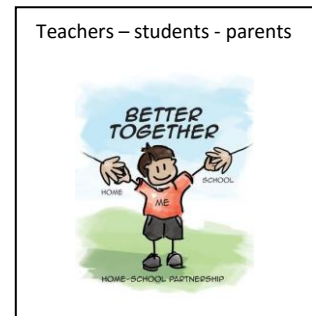
If you have any questions about the new report format please direct them to me via our school email or by phoning the school on 9433 1300. We would really appreciate you not using any time at your child's Student Learning Conversation to clarify aspects of the format or interpretation of the scales as the purpose of the Student Learning Conversation is to share in your child's learning with your child and their teacher. I am more than happy to clarify any aspects and answer any questions related to the new reports.

Our teachers put enormous time and effort into all that they do for their students and particularly writing their reports. Considerable time has been spent and we hope that you will appreciate the valuable information they contain.

Thank you

Keren Barro

Assistant Principal



The following links are provided for you to access more information about

- The teaching and learning program provided at each level of the school <http://www.apolloparkps.vic.edu.au/gradeinformationbooks/>
- Victorian curriculum <http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/>
- Information for parents about student reporting <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/primary/Pages/reportcards.aspx>

If you have any questions about this week's information or your child's report please email your question to me at school by Monday 19th June.

apollo.parkways.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au

Please write the following in the subject line of your email - Keren Barro student report question



Reporting to Parents.

survey

This week's focus is **gathering feedback from our parents**

This week you will have received your child's report and participated in their Student Learning Conversation with their teacher. Your child will have shared samples of their work and you will have been able to take their portfolio home to look at the other samples it contains.

We are now asking for your feedback on our new reporting to parents process through a brief survey. It should take you no longer than five minutes to complete and the information will enable us to evaluate our new approach.

Please complete the survey by clicking on the link below.

<https://goo.gl/forms/qgBXCuX43mLSJUY2>

If your child is in Prep – Grade 4 could you please take the time to complete the Two Stars and a Wish document and include it in their portfolio? Portfolios are due back to school by the end of the first week of Term 3.

If your child is Grade 5 or Grade 6 please enter your feedback into your child's digital portfolio on their iPad.

We value your input and thank you for taking the time to complete our survey.

Keren Barro

Assistant Principal