



Curriculum

Planning, Programming, Assessing, Reporting to Parents K – 12

1. Curriculum Planning and Programming – Curriculum and Allocation of time

1.1 The Joseph Varga School (JVS) will plan curriculum and develop teaching programs that are consistent with the Education Act and Board of Studies syllabuses and credentialing requirements.

1.2 The JVS Curriculum planning and teaching programs will meet the Policy Standards outlined in this Policy.

1.3 Teaching programs will incorporate assessment as an integral component.

1.4 Teaching programs will indicate the outcomes being addressed, the teaching activities planned and the intended assessment strategies.

1.5 Curriculum planning and programming will account for the needs of all students. This includes students with disabilities.

For JVS students with an intellectual disability, where the learning program does not follow age/stage curriculum expectations of Board of Studies syllabuses, consultation on curriculum outcomes and content occurs with parents/carers during Individual Education Planning Meetings held each term.

Years K – 6

1.6 Learning programs, based on Board of Studies (BOS) syllabuses, are provided to address each learning area in each year of schooling. In providing curriculum, JVS ensures that priority is given to English and Mathematics in all primary years, especially in the early years.

1.7 JVS teaching staff provide the flexibility of 'pure' and 'integrated' programs, while adhering to the Board of Studies requirement that:

- approximately 50% of time is allocated for English and Mathematics and 40% of time for the other KLAs and sport
- as part of the 40% allocation, JVS includes two hours per week for planned physical activity, including in Years 3 – 6, a minimum of one hour for sport.

1.8 There are no additional K – 6 curriculum requirements for JVS to meet.

Years 7 – 10

1.9 Learning programs, based on Board of Studies syllabuses, are to be provided for each subject or course in each year of schooling. In providing this curriculum program, JVS meets the requirements of the Board of Studies for students to gain the Record of School Achievement (RoSA).

1.10 The following summarises the BOS and JVS requirements when providing curriculum:

- 500 hours per subject for English, mathematics and science, over Years 7 – 10
- 400 hours for HSIE, including in Years 7 - 8, 100 hours for geography and 100 hours for history and, in Years 9 - 10, 100 hours for Australian history and 100 hours for Australian geography,
- 100 hours of one language in a continuous one-year period
- 200 hours for technology (mandatory) over Years 7 and 8
- 100 hours for music and 100 hours of visual arts

NB: *It must be noted that while the required hours are allocated for each of the above KLAs, students may not have the same number or complexity of outcomes i.e. that cover all syllabus outcomes at age-appropriate stage (i.e. reduced and/or adjusted) in order to meet the needs of JVS students with behavioural, emotional, and/or intellectual special needs.*

2. Assessment

2.1 JVS Plans assessment so that:

- i. students can demonstrate achievement of outcomes for the relevant stage of learning.
- ii. valid and reliable assessment strategies are used.
- iii. the timing, frequency and nature of the assessment processes are time efficient and manageable for teachers and students

2.2 Teachers plan assessment strategies when developing teaching programs and will also make additional assessment judgments in the course of teaching and learning.

2.3 Teachers use a variety of appropriate assessments for judging student achievement.

2.4 Teachers collect and record assessment information to:

- i. guide ongoing teaching and learning
- ii. monitor and evaluate student progress
- iii. report achievement to parents and relevant authorities in accord with school requirements and Department policy.

2.5 JVS is required to undertake assessment to collect information about students' learning. This will occur through both formal and informal activities.

2.6 Assessment of student learning will be undertaken for all learners from K-12 including students accessing life skills outcomes and content in Years 7-10 or following life skills patterns of study in Years 11 and 12.

2.7 When students are provided with accommodations to support student learning, accommodations will also be provided during assessment activities.

3. Reporting to Parents

3.1 Components of the written report

3.1.1 JVS will provide parents/carers, throughout the school year, with formal and informal opportunities to receive information about and discuss their child's learning.

3.1.2 The school's procedures for reporting to parents will be:

- (i) time efficient and manageable and
- (ii) developed in consultation with parents/carers and teachers.

3.1.3 JVS will disseminate to parents/carers the reports from state-wide testing programs and, as appropriate, will provide opportunity for discussion between teachers and parents/carers.

3.1.4 The parents of all students are to be provided with a written report twice a year. The written report for each student will:

- (i) use plain language
- (ii) provide information on a student's learning in each of the key learning areas (KLAs) or subjects
- (iii) compare the student's achievement in each KLA or subject against statewide syllabus standards*
- (iv) include teacher comments for each KLA or subject; comments will identify areas of student strength and for further development
- (v) have information about the student's attendance at school (*implementation T4, 2013*)
- (vi) provide information about student achievement in relation to school programs that extend or are additional to syllabus requirements e.g. emotional/behavioural and life skill domains of personal development which includes developmental milestones.

(vii) provide information about the student's social development and commitment to learning.

***Syllabus Standards:**

Syllabus standards are described by the components of a syllabus. The components that contribute to teachers' understandings of syllabus standards include objectives, stage or foundation statements, syllabus outcomes and syllabus content or indicators. Foundation statements (K-6) and Stage statements (Years 7-10) encompass, at a broader level than syllabus outcomes, the nature and scope of learning in each stage.

3.2 Achievement in Each Key Learning Area

Years K – 6

3.2.1 JVS will report annually on the six key learning areas of English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and Its Environment, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education and Creative Arts.

3.2.2 In English and Mathematics, reports will show achievement information for each broad syllabus strand.

3.2.3 In Kindergarten, reports will include English and Mathematics and other key learning areas covered in the reporting period.

Years 7 – 10

3.2.4 Schools will report on subjects or courses studied in the eight key learning areas of English, Mathematics, Science, Technology, Human Society and Its Environment, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education, Creative Arts and Languages.

3.2.5 In all KLAs, reports will show information for components of each subject.

Years 11 – 12

3.2.6 Schools will report on subjects or courses studied. In all subjects or courses, reports will show information for components of each subject, including those students who are studying via Distance Education.

English as a second language (ESL) students, K -10

3.2.7 Reports for students learning English as a second language (ESL students) at JVS will provide information about:

- (i) learning in each of the key learning areas or subjects or courses studied and
- (ii) information about the student's progress in learning English

NB: *An ESL student is a student from a language background other than English (LBOTE) who is receiving support through an ESL Targeted Support program at JVS or ESL New Arrivals Program (AIS grant).*

Students for whom Accommodations and/or Learning Adjustments have been made

3.2.8 All students enrolled at JVS require accommodations ⁽¹⁾ and/or learning adjustments ⁽²⁾ to be made to allow them to access the curriculum.

JVS will provide information about learning for these students:

- in K – 6, in each of the six key learning areas,
- in 7 – 10, in subjects or courses studied in the eight key learning areas or, where undertaken, life skills outcomes and content,
- in 11 – 12, in subjects or courses studied, or where undertaken, subjects undertaken as part of life skills patterns of study.

3.2.9 For students for whom learning adjustments have been made, the report will show achievement in components of the negotiated, adjusted program in each KLA or subject.

- (1) Accommodations are changes to an environment that will allow students with additional needs to participate fully in the same learning, working towards the same syllabus outcomes and content, as all other students of the same age/stage.*

Accommodations could include sign language, Braille, a reader or scribe, access to technology, personal carer support or modifications to equipment, furniture and learning spaces.

- (2) Learning adjustments are measures or actions taken in relation to teaching, learning and assessing that enable a student to access and participate in achieving syllabus outcomes and content, that are different from those for the age/stage group, and that meet the student's personalised learning needs.*

3.3 Comparing student achievement against state wide syllabus standards in each key learning area

NB: Currently grades are not used at The Joseph Varga School as this is viewed as demoralising for students who are predominantly achieving far below 'mainstream' cohort expectations and have a history of disengagement in mainstream school contexts.

NAPLAN results, however, are communicated to parents to provide this comparative information.

Currently, teaching staff utilize 'Assessment Methods', in accordance with School-Based Manuals (based on NSW Board of Studies Policies and Procedures relating to e.g. Grades) by which outcomes are assessed.

All students at JVS have a 'Personalised Report' (see 3.3.9).

The school will be reviewing the use of all assessment approaches in 2014, as part of a curriculum policy and procedure review.

Kindergarten

3.3.1 Reports will describe how a child's achievement compares with syllabus standards through teacher comments.

Years 1 – 10

3.3.2 JVS will use a five point achievement scale to report to parents for students in Years 1 – 10. Achievement is judged in relation to syllabus standards.

3.3.3 An achievement scale is used for reporting all KLAs or subjects, except VET courses, where competency will be reported.

Years 11 – 12

3.3.4 JVS currently reports on 'outcomes achieved' with regards to meeting NSW Board of Studies syllabus requirements to convey what the student knows and can do in relation to syllabus standards in each course. Due to the nature of the students and their needs, assessment scores and grading are considered counter-productive in relation to developing a sense of self-worth and developing engagement in learning. In the case of Life Skills, criteria includes the extent to which a student can satisfactorily achieve an outcome independently.

3.3.5 For VET courses, JVS will report on the competency a student has achieved.

3.3.6 For each subject a JVS student is studying through Distance Education, Distance Education will provide achievement grades and descriptors to clearly convey what the student knows and has achieved in relation to syllabus standards.

English as a second language (ESL) students, K -10

3.3.7 JVS will use the following grades for ESL students to report achievement in English when reporting to parents. The student's report will indicate that it shows achievement in learning English judged in relation to these ESL Scales:

- **ESL 6** The student can communicate with developing accuracy and complexity of language in formal and informal situations. With assistance, the student can analyse complex texts and can improve their writing through planning and revision.
- **ESL 5** The student can communicate with varying fluency and accuracy, ideas about a range of topics. With assistance, the student can analyse unfamiliar texts and write and edit using appropriate language and structure.
- **ESL 4** The student can communicate ideas about familiar topics using suitable language. With assistance, the student can understand the main ideas and details in texts and plan and write about a variety of familiar topics.
- **ESL 3** The student can take part in simple conversations in social and learning situations. With assistance, the student can read and learn from simple texts and can write stories and factual texts.
- **ESL 2** The student can communicate simple messages in familiar situations. With assistance, the student can read and write simple texts about personal experiences, events and ideas.

- **ESL 1** The student is beginning to learn English. Some students can communicate using single words. Other students can communicate using simple words and phrases and can read and write simple sentences.

NB: JVS will also report on student's achievement in any other KLA (**Personalised Report**) where the student has been able to satisfactory access the content and demonstrate achievement e.g. Numeracy, PDHPE, Creative Arts etc.

JVS will report too on the behavioural, emotional, and social development of ESL students.

Students for whom learning adjustments have been made

3.3.9 For students for whom learning adjustments have been made (e.g. due to an intellectual or emotional disability), the student's report will indicate that it shows achievement against a personalised learning program (i.e. **P – Personalised** - The student has learning needs that require access to content and competencies that are at a different level from their age peer group).

3.3.10 In general, 'personalised' reports will be provided for students with moderate or severe levels of intellectual disability, but may also be provided for students with other confirmed disabilities (e.g. emotional disturbance, behaviour disorder) in those KLAs where a learning adjustment has been provided.

3.3.11 In addition to reporting the student's achievement, in key learning areas or subjects where learning adjustments have been made, through written comments, schools also may report the student's achievement using the following scale:

P4 – Independent The student can complete a task independently, without assistance. The student maintains the skill or knowledge over time. The student generalises the skill or knowledge to new settings, people or materials.

P3 – Frequent The student relies on partial prompts to complete a task. The student can regularly perform the skill or demonstrate knowledge. The student uses the skills or knowledge in a variety of familiar settings and situations.

P2 – Occasional The student understands information, concept and/or can perform skill. The student often relies on physical or verbal assistance when participating in a task. The student has begun to demonstrate the skills in selected, familiar settings.

P1 – Beginning The student has some existing prior knowledge and/or necessary pre skills for the task. The student is beginning to participate in a task with maximum teacher assistance. The student uses skills and knowledge in a single setting.

3.4 Comparing student achievement with the child's peer group at the school in each key learning area or subject in Years 1 – 12

3.4.1 In response to requests from a child's parents/carers for JVS to provide information on how their child's achievement compares with the performance of the student's peer group, it must be noted that such comparisons are not appropriate as they are statistically invalid and unreliable due to the severity and diverse nature of student needs at JVS, as well as the very

small cohort of students across the three classrooms i.e. in some instances only one student in a year level (see 3.4.3 below)

3.4.2 For Years 11 and 12, information on how student achievement compares with that of the peer group will be provided through course group rankings or grade distributions as produced by Distance Education where applicable.

Where students are reported with ‘personalised learning needs’

3.4.3 JVS is not required to provide information to parents about how their child compares with the student’s peer group and the student is not included in the number of students achieving at each of the five levels of the achievement scale.

3.4.4 JVS will use standardised assessment data (where appropriate) for those students achieving a ‘regular’ curriculum program (not adjusted) in which to present peer achievement comparisons should they be requested by parents.

4. Audience and applicability

4.1 This policy applies to all staff employed at JVS. It also applies to students who attend JVS and has implications for the JVS school community.

5.Responsibilities / delegations

5.1 The Principal of The Joseph Varga School has the delegated authority by the JVS Board of Directors to review and modify this Policy in consultation with the NSW Board of Studies requirements and changes to relevant legislation.

5.2 The JVS Board of Directors are responsible for the governance of JVS and in ensuring policies are adhered to and meet legislative requirements.

6.Monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements

6.1 This Policy, and related procedural statements, are reviewed on a regular basis.

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