



Department of  
Education

# North Metropolitan Education Region Early Years Extension (EYE) Program

## Information Booklet

**2016**



## **INTRODUCTION**

The Early Years Extension (EYE) Program was introduced in 2012 as an initiative of the North Metropolitan Education Region (NMER), following amalgamation of the former West Coast and Swan Education Districts. It has been developed by some of the Primary Extension and Challenge (PEAC) team to offer extension opportunities to selected Early Years students in Years One to Three from public schools across the region.

## **SCOPE AND STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM**

Adding a new cohort of Year One students each year since 2012 has seen the Early Years Extension (EYE) Program cater for over 1100 students from over 130 of the region's schools. Geographically, these schools range from Lancelin and Bullsbrook in the north and northeast, to Mosman Park in the south and Chidlow in the east.

The program has been conducted at host schools as well as at the region's primary school-based PEAC centres. This helps foster partnerships with our networks and schools and is designed to minimise the distances that students need to travel in order to participate in the program.

As far as possible, students are grouped with other students within their school's network and they are usually invited to attend the same session as other students from their school.

In 2015, all selected students were offered ten hours of face-to-face time spread over five sessions. The 2016 Year One Program is offering an increase in this direct contact time to 12.25 hours. All programs have been supplemented with optional online contact offered through the secure environment of Edmodo classrooms. Further information can be found at <https://www.edmodo.com/about>

Parents are informed, through their child's school, of locations, dates and times of sessions and are given the contact details of the EYE teacher. It is the responsibility of the parent to organise the transportation of their child to and from each session. The start and finish times for sessions may vary slightly from group to group depending on the circumstances at each location. The program is optional and parents are asked to take note of the behavioural expectation statement in their child's invitation letter.

The program incurs a small cost of \$10 that is payable to your child's school.

## **SELECTION**

Your child's invitation to participate as a student in the program has come about through a comprehensive nomination process. This includes the completion of checklists, designed to provide relevant information, and data such as On-Entry Assessment results in Literacy and Numeracy. This process has been designed to identify students who would benefit from extension and the opportunity to work with like-minded peers.

It should be noted that this is a non-standardised selection process. It should not, therefore, be relied on as an accurate predictor of students' future performance in standardised tests; such as the Year 4 PEAC test or examinations for entry into selective government schools at high school level. Students invited to the EYE Program have not been identified as Gifted and Talented and any future offer of supplementary provision cannot be presumed.

## PEAC

Primary Extension and Challenge (PEAC) is a Department of Education endorsed program for Gifted and Talented students in Western Australia.

PEAC provides supplementary provision for identified students in Years 5 and 6. It is designed to meet the special learning needs of those students identified as being in the top 2.5% of the population.

More information about PEAC can be found at the website.

[www.northmetropeac.wa.edu.au](http://www.northmetropeac.wa.edu.au)

## LINKS WITH YOUR SCHOOL

Extension opportunities for students are optional. It is important to keep the lines of communication open between classroom teachers and EYE teachers. Whilst we would encourage full attendance at all the sessions, there will be occasions when students may not be able to attend owing to clashes with school programs or illness. We have designed the program with this in mind and our approach is flexible. Please make contact with your child's EYE teacher to discuss any individual concerns. EYE students should not attend sessions if they are ill.

A key role for PEAC/EYE teachers is the professional support of schools. We visit schools to work with individual teachers and whole staff to assist them in catering for the learning needs of the Gifted and Talented students in our region. The EYE Program has been designed with this key role in mind and we offer the opportunity for classroom teachers to see the program in action throughout the region. Furthermore, we offer the program through GIFT Network meetings for primary teachers. This long-standing network is available for interested teachers and offers them professional learning opportunities in the area of Gifted and Talented education.

## THE TEACHING PROGRAM

The EYE teaching program has been designed to ensure that it is:

- supplementary to school provision
- rigorous in content and application
- continuously monitored and evaluated
- aligned to the skills, strengths and needs of the students

The EYE Program is fully aligned with the Western Australian Curriculum.

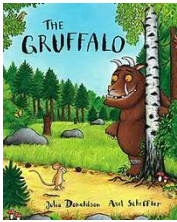
It draws on the 'General Capabilities': *Critical & Creative Thinking, Personal & Social Capability, Literacy as a General Capability and Numeracy as a General Capability* as well as the 'Cross-Curriculum Priorities': *Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Histories & Cultures; Asia & Australia's engagement with Asia and Sustainability.*

By using these components, we have designed a program that will complement rather than repeat curriculum content that students will cover at school, and give them access to skills that will allow them to be effective 21<sup>st</sup> Century learners. We also work under the umbrella of Costa and Kallick's 16 Habits of Mind: a set of dispositions that are characteristic of successful thinkers and problem solvers from all walks of life. A summary of these is included at the end of this booklet. Visit <http://www.habitsofmind.co.uk/the-habits.html> for more information.

## Philosophy for Children

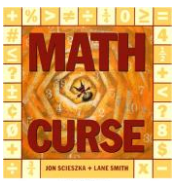
The teaching program is built on a Philosophy for Children approach. This international methodology is also known as P4C and has evolved from the work of Dr Matthew Lipman in the 1970s. We use this approach to explore questions and ideas in literacy and numeracy. Most sessions include a P4C component where students are encouraged to ask open-ended questions in response to a stimulus, usually a book or a video. Discussions follow that are guided by the children's thoughts and ideas. Students are encouraged to agree and disagree and to build on the ideas of others, always giving a reason for their point of view. Sessions will also involve other practical and hands-on activities but will remain flexible so that each teacher may respond to the individual needs and interests of each group. More information about P4C can be found online, for example at <http://p4c.com/about-p4c>

## TEXT EXAMPLES



### **The Gruffalo by Julia Donaldson**

This familiar book can be used to explore such questions as 'What is bravery?' 'Is it always good to be brave?' 'Do animals talk to each other the way humans do?' 'Is there such a thing as a Gruffalo?' and 'Can you think of an example of something that exists but you can't see?'



### **Math Curse by Jon Scieszka**

We have selected this book as an example of one that helps students to appreciate the place of maths in the real world – *“On Monday at school, Mrs Fibonacci says, ‘You know you can think of almost everything as a math problem.’ On Tuesday I started having problems...”*

The outcomes of the program include helping the students to:

- Learn to think before they speak and give reasons for what they say
- Value their views and the views of others
- Learn to not take things too personally
- Learn respect and negotiation
- Learn not to be fearful
- Be highly curious

Reflection sheets have been developed for students to take home and complete with you each week. We hope they will facilitate conversation with your children about what they have learned and how they are feeling. These sheets will then serve to track student progress and allow us as their teachers to respond to particular issues and observations. The reflection sheets will come in a file that can be brought back to class each week and the first one will come with guidelines for parents. There will be no set way to complete them- we would like you and your child to make decisions about this according to their preferences and your circumstances.

Summaries of the Year One, Two and Three programs that have been developed since 2012 are included on the following pages.

# Y1 Early Years Extension (EYE) Program

## "Thinking About Thinking"



*"Metacognition means becoming increasingly aware of one's actions and the effect of those actions on others and on the environment; forming internal questions as one searches for information and meaning."*

Arthur L. Costa

*"The hardest kind of thinking...is thinking about thinking." Anna, age 9*

The Year One Early Years Extension (EYE) Program has been designed to provide students with:

*"rigorous, relevant and engaging learning opportunities drawn from the Australian curriculum and aligned with their individual learning needs, strengths, interests and goals."* ACARA 2013

It seeks to tap into students' natural curiosity, encourage open-ended questioning and stimulate thoughtful discussion and reasoning.

The program uses the Philosophy for Children (P4C) approach, pioneered by Matthew Lipman and developed by Karen Murriss through *Teaching Philosophy with Picture Books*, to encourage students to ask and answer questions that elicit multiple and diverse responses. Carefully chosen stimuli, including picture books and video clips are used in each session to generate 'wonderings' and stimulate higher order thinking and metacognition. In a community circle students are encouraged to ask and answer questions; listen to each other and build on each other's ideas; and to give reasons why they agree or disagree. Each session also includes literacy or numeracy based practical tasks designed to stimulate creativity, thinking, discussion and diversity of response. The teaching program is aligned with the Australian Curriculum and is flexible in its structure; to enable the teachers to respond to the interests, nature and needs of each group.

Art Costa and Bena Kallick's 16 Habits of Mind (characteristics of successful thinkers) act as an umbrella for the program and students begin their learning about how these dispositions can be applied to their learning and their lives. Students are encouraged to complete weekly reflections, with parents or guardians, to help develop their critical thinking and reasoning skills.

The program utilises Edmodo, a secure online classroom, to provide a platform for students to complete tasks; access recommended extra resources; prepare for sessions; and communicate with their teacher and class from home. We encourage EYE parents and guardians to access Edmodo *with* their children. Updates posted by the teacher allow parents to share in and extend what their child has covered in the extension sessions. Other related items are also posted as opportunities for students to follow up on aspects of the program that most interest them. Students are encouraged to use Edmodo as another forum to explain their thinking. Information about how to access Edmodo is provided to students and parents at the beginning of the program.

If parents have questions or comments about the program they are encouraged to contact their child's Early Years Extension teacher.



# Y2 Early Years Extension (EYE) Program

## "The World and Me"

*"Children... are connected with and contribute to their world, are confident and involved learners and effective communicators"*  
Early Years Learning Framework (COAG 2009)



The Year Two Early Years Extension program has been designed to build on and extend the work done with our students in Year One. We continue to use the Philosophy for Children (P4C) approach to further students' ability to ask and answer questions that encourage multiple and diverse responses. We also aim to advance their understandings and applications of the Habits of Mind. Further to this, we aim for students to develop their sense of identity and wellbeing and their appreciation of their place in the world.

As in the Year One program, the Habits of Mind (as dispositions necessary for success) will act as an umbrella and P4C will provide a forum for asking open-ended questions and engaging in thoughtful discussion. Familiar and new thinking tools will be utilised to extend the students' thinking.

Program content continues to draw on 'General Capabilities' of the Australian Curriculum: Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability, Literacy and Numeracy and 'Cross-Curriculum Priorities'. As with the Year One program, our lesson planning is structured to enable the teachers to respond to the interests, nature and needs of each group.

The program features a core non-fiction text called "The Travel Book," published for kids by Lonely Planet; which concentrates on the really interesting bits of the very big place that is our world: *"From amazing animals and super sights to fun festivals and fabulous food, this book is packed with hundreds of facts about every country on our planet"*

Your children will be 'Responding with Wonderment and Awe' (one of the 16 Habits of Mind) as they are encouraged to ask and answer questions about their world.

We use Edmodo: a secure online classroom environment used internationally by millions of educators and students. This medium provides a platform for students to complete tasks; access recommended extra resources; prepare for sessions; and communicate with their teacher and class from home. We encourage EYE parents to access Edmodo *with* their children. Updates posted by the teacher allow parents to share in and extend what their children have covered in the extension sessions and provide opportunities for students to follow up on the aspects of the program that most interest them. Students are encouraged to use Edmodo as another forum to explain their thinking. Information about how to access Edmodo is provided to students and parents at the beginning of the program.

If parents have any questions or comments about the program they are encouraged to contact their child's Early Years Extension teacher.

## Y3 Early Years Extension (EYE) Program

### "It's all About Perception"

*Perception – “The way you think about or understand someone or something.”  
“The way that you notice or understand something using one of your senses.” Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*



The Year Three Early Years Extension program has been designed to build on and extend the work done with our students in Year One and Year Two. We continue to use the Philosophy for Children (P4C) approach to further students' ability to ask and answer questions that encourage multiple and diverse responses and foster discussion where students build on one another's ideas. We also aim to advance their understandings and applications of the Habits of Mind. Further to this, we aim for students to develop their ability to look at the world from points of view other than their own. This represents a significant step forward in terms of child development theory as students will be encouraged to move from egocentric to more empathetic thinking.

The program is designed with an overall theme of 'Perception' and the way different people "see" things: both concretely and cognitively. Sub-themes have been developed and include 'Walking in Others' Shoes,' 'Look at it a Different Way,' and 'It's All Relative.'

Program content continues to draw on the General Capabilities of the Australian Curriculum: Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability, Literacy as a General Capability and Numeracy as a General Capability. The program is full of 'big ideas' and opportunities for 'flexible thinking' (one of the 16 Habits of Mind). The program utilises an engaging range of stimuli and activities for students to enjoy and learn from and is structured to enable the teachers to respond to the ideas, interests, nature and needs of each group.

As in the Year One and Year Two programs, the Habits of Mind (as dispositions necessary for success) will act as an umbrella and P4C will provide a forum for asking thought-provoking questions and engaging in empathetic listening and discussion. Familiar and new thinking tools will be utilised to extend the students' thinking.

The program utilises the extra dimension of Edmodo: a secure online classroom environment used internationally by millions of educators and students. This medium provides a platform for students to complete tasks; access recommended extra resources; prepare for sessions; and communicate with their teacher and class from home. We encourage EYE parents to access Edmodo *with* their children. Updates posted by the teacher allow parents to share in and extend what their children have covered in the extension sessions and provide opportunities for students to follow up on aspects of the program that most interest them. Students are encouraged to use Edmodo as another forum to explain their thinking. Information about how to access Edmodo is provided to students and parents at the beginning of the program.

If parents have any questions or comments about the program they are encouraged to contact their child's Early Years Extension teacher.

# COSTA and KALLICK'S 16 HABITS OF MIND

 <p><b>PERSISTING</b> Stick to it! Persevering in a task through to completion; remaining focused; looking for ways to reach your goal when stuck; not giving up.</p>	 <p><b>THINKING &amp; COMMUNICATING WITH CLARITY &amp; PRECISION</b> Be clear! Striving for accurate communication in both written and oral form; avoid over generalisations, distortions and deletions.</p>
 <p><b>MANAGING IMPULSIVITY</b> Take your time! Thinking before acting; remain calm, thoughtful and deliberate</p>	 <p><b>GATHERING DATA THROUGH ALL THE SENSES</b> Use your natural pathways! Gathering data through all the sensory pathways-gustatory, olfactory, tactile, kinaesthetic, auditory and visual.</p>
 <p><b>LISTENING WITH UNDERSTANDING &amp; EMPATHY</b> Understand others! Devoting mental energy to another person's thoughts &amp; ideas; holding in abeyance one's own thoughts in order to perceive another's point of view.</p>	 <p><b>CREATING, IMAGINING AND INNOVATING</b> Try a different way! Generating new and novel ideas, fluency and originality.</p>
 <p><b>THINKING FLEXIBLY</b> Look at it another way! Being able to change perspective, generate alternatives and consider options.</p>	 <p><b>RESPONDING WITH WONDERMENT AND AWE</b> Have fun figuring it out! Finding the world awesome, mysterious and being intrigued with phenomena and beauty.</p>
 <p><b>THINKING ABOUT YOUR THINKING- METACOGNITION</b> Know your knowing! Being aware of one's own thoughts, strategies, feelings and actions and their effects on others.</p>	 <p><b>TAKING RESPONSIBLE RISKS</b> Venture out! Being adventuresome; living on the edge of one's competence.</p>
 <p><b>STRIVING FOR ACCURACY</b> Check it again! A desire for exactness, fidelity and craftsmanship.</p>	 <p><b>FINDING HUMOUR</b> Laugh a little! Finding the whimsical, incongruous and unexpected; being able to laugh at yourself.</p>
 <p><b>QUESTIONING AND POSING PROBLEMS</b> How do you know? Having a questioning attitude; knowing what data you need and developing questioning strategies to produce that data. Finding problems to solve.</p>	 <p><b>THINKING INTERDEPENDENTLY</b> Work together! Being able to work in and learn from others in reciprocal situations.</p>
 <p><b>APPLYING PAST KNOWLEDGE TO NEW SITUATIONS</b> Use what you learn! Accessing prior knowledge; transferring knowledge beyond the situation in which it was learned.</p>	 <p><b>REMAINING OPEN TO CONTINUOUS LEARNING</b> I have so much more to learn! Having humility and pride when admitting we don't know; resisting complacency.</p>