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 Murris 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 (as dispositions of successful thinkers) act as an umbrella for the program and students begin their learning about how these Habits 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. Information about how to access Edmodo is provided to students and parents at the beginning of the program.

Feedback for each student is provided after the program is complete. This typically includes student self-assessment and a teacher comment.

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