

# The Structure of Junior Maths Curriculum at BCC

The Mathematics curriculum at Ballarat Clarendon College Junior School is structured differently from that found in most other subject areas and schools. We proudly acknowledge that the concept of 'year level' and 'term' are only found in sequence & duration charts – not in the organisation of content, teaching and learning strategies or assessment. Both the Sequence & Activities and assessment arms of the curriculum are organised by strand and divided into 'levels' that are consistent throughout the documentation. For example, 'Quantity Relationships and Counting' Sequence and Activities is a single document, divided into 9 levels that span the whole Junior School. This is the same for the Quantity Relations and Counting assessment document.

A student in any year level will receive the instruction and assessment which equates to the level within our curriculum documents that matches their need, not chronological age. This is made practical by re-grouping according to need across each cohort.

To illustrate how this works in practice, the following are the steps a new teacher would take to make decisions about what to teach their class.

- 1) The teacher looks at the 'Rainbow Sheets', which detail the agreed sequence and duration of topics / strands to find what content area they will be teaching.
- 2) There is a spreadsheet of data, available on our central computer system that details how that teacher's group of students performed in formal assessment the last time this topic was being taught. This is a strong indicator of the range of levels of need that group spans, what the spread looks like and any specific areas (or specific students) in need of extra attention.
- 3) Knowing the strand to be taught and the students' level of need, the teacher can now go to the appropriate strand document to find the agreed learning outcomes, in terms of transferable understandings and specific knowledge and skills, teaching strategies and the linked resources.
- 4) At the same time as the above, the teacher should access the assessment document and view both the agreed assessment items for that unit and the elaboration statements that detail what constitutes evidence of full, partial and insufficient understanding for each item.
- 5) The skill is now selecting the strategies and evidence of learning to match the demonstrated needs of the students and combining these elements in lesson plans that move all students to the next level.
- 6) Ongoing informal formative assessment gathering, as compared to the assessment elaboration statements, continue to inform the teacher in terms of pitch and pace adjustments.
- 7) At the time of the timetabled formal assessment of each strand, the cycle starts again. Here, the teacher uses the centralised data to select the appropriate assessment levels for each student. The students should complete the highest level at which they did not show full understanding at the time of the last assessment. At the teacher's discretion, they may also complete additional levels if sufficient understanding is demonstrated. The assessment data is entered into a common spreadsheet and stored centrally and transparently.

The above is a system where all the parts fit together and support each other to allow for true developmental teaching. We understand that age is a poor indicator of learning need and that to teach or assess according to age based criteria is to disadvantage the majority of students.