



Welcome to Multiage

Information for Parents and Carers

A multiage classroom is a 'family' where children of different ages can support and help each other, share and discuss issues and learn from and with each other.

Learning is finding out what you already know.

Doing is demonstrating that you know it.

Teaching is reminding others that they know just as well as you.

We are all **learners, doers** and **teachers**.

If we accept the importance of **child centered learning**, of regarding each child as an individual who matures and grows at his or her own rate, or process education, rather than content based teaching of integrated learning in preference to subject teaching, then the concept of family grouping seems a natural and logical approach to classroom organisation.



"I sometimes wonder how much we stop children from learning things by teaching them instead of making it more possible to teach themselves."

"It is not what we do for our children but what we have taught to do for themselves that will make them successful human beings."

"Too often we make children dependent on us. It is our job to make children independent of us and foster their interdependence on each other."

Listening to children is important.

Children like to know that adults value what they say.

Multiage Classrooms

INTRODUCTION

Multiage learning has been a feature of many small schools out of necessity for many years. The term 'multiage' in its simplest form refers to a class comprised of children of different ages intentionally grouped for learning. Because of the many desirable social and learning experiences and flexibility that this kind of classroom organisation affords, we are pleased to be able to have this opportunity to provide a range of multiage classrooms once again at Parkhurst State School.

WHAT WE HOPE TO ACHIEVE THROUGH MULTIAGE

- To create a positive, and supportive social context for learning
- To develop and promote attitudes and skills in cooperation and shared responsibilities
- To promote self motivated learning and achievement
- To promote the development of each child through catering for individual differences at a variety of levels
- To develop creativity, risk taking, problem solving and thinking
- To promote continued growth and development in children through the extended time period spent within the multiage classroom structure
- To promote the development of the skills required for lifelong learning



CLASSROOM ORGANISATION

Flexibility is the key. Furniture and seating arrangements frequently change according to the learning experiences, activities and the children. A variety of learning spaces will be created within the classroom to accommodate different activities and grouping arrangements. (eg; interest centres, work stations and quiet work areas).

GROUPS WITHIN THE CLASSROOM

All students form a whole class unit. Grouping arrangements vary in line with the learning experiences, the activity or task at the time and the children's needs. Grouping arrangements are not static. As students develop their skills in reading and writing, there will be many occasions when large or smaller specific groups will be used for classroom activities. Curriculum and learning offerings will be differentiated, individualised and personalised as required. Some of the groupings may comprise ...

WHOLE CLASS

The whole class may work with one or both teachers.

ABILITY GROUPS

Small or larger groups for teacher directed instruction to enable us to cater for the different abilities of our children.

NEEDS GROUPS

Small groups of children who are withdrawn from the rest of the class for short periods to receive additional support and instruction in particular areas of need.

MIXED GROUPS

Small groups of children of mixed aged and ability go on to explore different planned experiences, then report back to collectively prepare and present a finished product.

PARTNER AND BUDDY GROUPS

Pairs of children from the same or different year level work together for a particular activity. (eg; reading, spelling and writing)

THE TEACHER'S ROLE

The role of the teacher is flexible. A key role is that of a facilitator of learning range of teaching strategies, including explicit teaching. The emphasis tends to be on questioning rather than telling, on 'finding out' and 'having a go' rather than being told and on active learning rather than passive listening. Mistakes are accepted as a natural part of learning and earnest effort will be encouraged and rewarded.

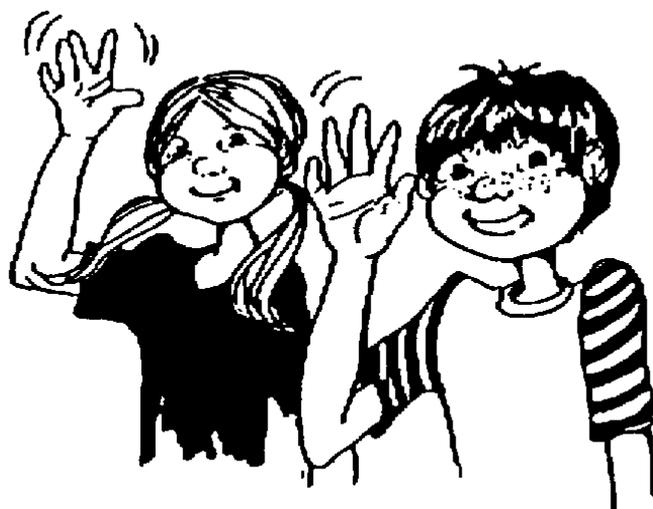
In this context, teachers seek to provide ...

- a positive and challenging environment
- enthusiasm for teaching and learning
- planned, purposeful learning experiences
- collected and prepared related resources
- assistance
- encouragement, care and support
- positive, responsive role models



Much of our classroom work directly relates to a current learning context or topic involving real life and life like experiences. There are naturally times when curriculum work will not specifically relate to the learning context, but will be organised according to the children's needs.

At the end of each Term, teachers report on each child's progress, achievement and performance with parents and carers across all aspects of schooling. There will be opportunities for parents and carers to meet face to face with their child/ren's classroom teachers in Terms One and Three. At the end of each Semester, written Reports will be sent home.



THE LEARNERS' ROLE

All children are individuals. They are uniquely different and need to be accepted and valued for the skills and personal qualities they bring to the classroom. Being the same age as someone else does not necessarily mean that abilities are the same. Each child has preferred learning styles and learn at a different rate. All children need to develop both cooperative and independent work skills, depending on the situation. In our multiage classrooms, the following skills and attitudes are valued and time is spent on their positive development.

SKILLS

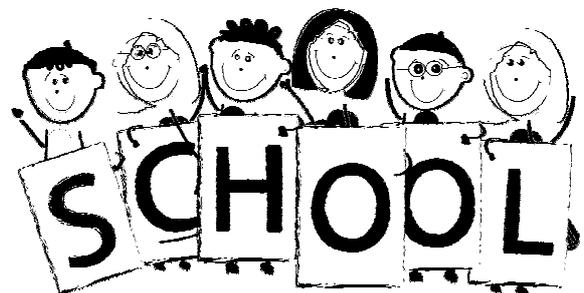
- Cooperation
- Creativity
- Risk Taking
- Communication
- Independence
- Reflection
- Participation
- Thinking
- Responsibility for own actions
- Adopting of a variety of roles
- Making choices and decision making



ATTITUDES

- Self confidence and self esteem
- Tolerance and acceptance of others
- Flexibility in work situations, activities and groupings, etc

Children will have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Classroom expectations are collaboratively written, prominently displayed and regularly referred to. Children are expected to take responsibility for their own actions and follow the established classroom routines. Children will be encouraged to take risks in their daily learning and to accept that making mistakes is a natural part of learning.



THE ROLE OF PARENTS AND CARERS

The home and parents are a child's **first** teachers. Teachers and parents are both facilitators of learning. As such, it is important for us all to positively encourage children, to listen to them, to provide resources for learning and appropriate role models.

It is also important to foster growing independence and responsibility for actions, belongings and behaviour. There will be regular opportunities for parent involvement in our classrooms.

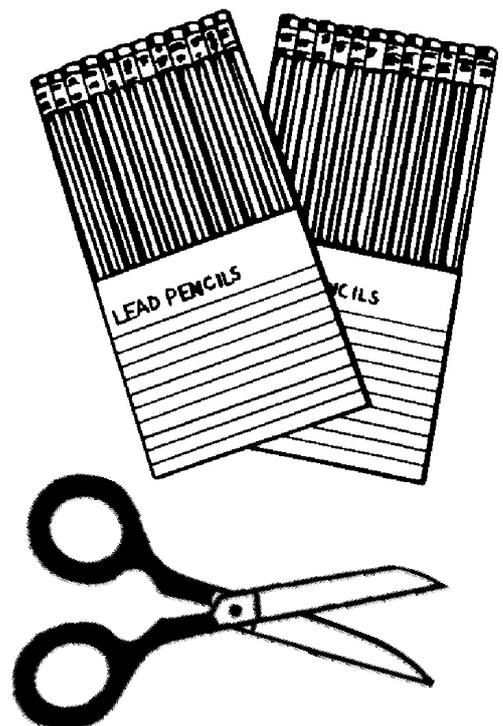
Positive communication between home and school is essential. Parents are welcome to initiate a discussion with us regarding concerns or the progress of their child/children. Similarly, we may need to contact you to discuss a child's learning or behaviour.

Parents and Carers are encouraged to become an active part of their child/ren's education by assisting in the classroom, attending assemblies and other significant events and activities as they occur.

SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM ROUTINES

The establishment of routines is essential when settling children into school. Some of the classroom and school routines include ...

- Having equipment ready – eg; sharp pencils, etc
- Home Reading and set Homework Tasks
- Homework Correction
- Morning Tea and Lunch
- Tuckshop
- Reading, Maths, Art and Science Groups
- Student Banking
- Library Lessons and Book Borrowing
- Friday Assembly
- Smart Moves – eg; 'Jump Jam'
- Swimming Lessons
- Brain Food Breaks
- Physical Education Lessons
- Music Specialist Lessons
- Religious Education Lessons
- Sports Equipment Borrowing
- Being Sun Safe, wearing hats
- Play Time in correct designated areas
- Computer Centre Visits



WHAT CAN YOU DO AT HOME ?

- **ASK** your child about his/her day
- **INVOLVE** him/her in the things that you do at home
- **TALK** about the things that you do

HOMEWORK

- Ten minutes home reading per night
- Prep and Year One Learners may be given set tasks to reinforce key concepts, skills, sounds and sight words as they are introduced.
- Other learners may have set nightly tasks outlined on a weekly Homework Sheet together with spelling.

We invite all Parents and Carers to come and TALK with us, see what we are doing and become involved.

Kind regards from The Parkhurst State School Teacher Team.



Tomorrow is the day,
Your first day of school
Tomorrow is the day,
You may need this magic tool.

No need to be scared,
Lots of friends you will make.
But if you are scared,
Only a pinch of this dust it will take

This magical dust,
Tucked under your head
This magical dust,
Gives you courage instead.

So sleep tight with this magic,
and you will be prepared.
Sleep tight with this magic,
and remember that I care.

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