



# MIDDLE YEARS NEWSLETTER Term 1

Email: [melanie.brown118@schools.sa.edu.au](mailto:melanie.brown118@schools.sa.edu.au)  
[jan.murphy345@schools.sa.edu.au](mailto:jan.murphy345@schools.sa.edu.au)  
[michael.gibbins596@schools.sa.edu.au](mailto:michael.gibbins596@schools.sa.edu.au)  
[patrick.carroll159@schools.sa.edu.au](mailto:patrick.carroll159@schools.sa.edu.au)

## Introduction

Dear Families,

Hello and welcome to the Middle Years classes. We are excited to be working collaboratively as a Middle Years team this year and look forward to the exciting teaching and learning opportunities we have in store for your child/children.

## Meet the Teachers

Melanie Brown- Room 7

Hello, my name is Melanie Brown and this is my third year teaching at Kidman Park Primary School. I have been a Middle Years teacher for the past seven years, working with students from Years 4 to 7. I really enjoy teaching Middle Years students, watching them learn and grow, and supporting them as they transition into high school. I am really passionate about creating a positive, supportive and nurturing classroom environment where students feel comfortable, safe and are encouraged to take risks in their learning and accept challenges. It would be lovely to meet you if I haven't already, so please feel free to pop into Room 7 (the library for now!) and say hello.

Jan Murphy- Room 8

Hello, my name is Jan Murphy and I am a new member of the Middle Years team. My first teaching contract was at KPPS in 1985 and since then most of my teaching has been in Port Pirie and Georgetown in the Mid North region. My focus for the first few weeks will be to establish routines and expectations, get to know your child and to gain a better understanding of how teaching and learning is structured in the Middle Years team through the Walker Learning Approach. My aim is to develop a positive learning environment where your child feels valued and respected and will strive to be the best they can be.

Michael Gibbins- Room 9

Hi, my name is Michael Gibbins and I am excited to return to KPPS for 2018! The opportunities we have for our learners this year are fantastic and I feel that we have a great mix of teachers, new learning environment and teaching methodology which will help Middle Years students to succeed as valued learners. My priority is to establish positive working relationships with my students and inform parents / care givers about learning development. I look forward to supporting and assisting in the challenges and achievements that Room 9 & other Middle Years students will experience this year.

Patrick Carroll- Room 10

Hi all, 2018 is my first year as a fully-fledged teacher! I spent last year completing my final practicum here at Kidman Park with Melanie Brown in Room 7, and finished the year as a temporary relief teacher here, and in the surrounding schools. I have a trade background (carpentry), and have coached several sporting teams across the last few years. I'm passionate about helping students achieve their potential as learners and members of the local community, and will do my very best to foster each student's creativity, inquisitiveness and confidence as

students as they progress through the middle years. My aim is to create a classroom environment where students are encouraged by all to take educational risks and grow as lifelong learners.

To contact a teacher to discuss learning development/issues, please contact via email which are listed at the bottom of the newsletter.

## **General Routines**

### **Walker Learning**

In the Middle Years, students will be taught through the Walker Learning Approach. This includes working in a flexible learning environment, student directed learning opportunities, class meetings, the use of a student-parent-teacher communication board, focus students, Education Research Projects and tuning in sessions each morning. These elements have been elaborated on throughout the newsletter, but please come and speak to us if you have any questions.

### **Morning Routine**

When the second bell rings at 8.40 the classroom will be opened for the students. The students will need to line up at their spot outside of the building for the teachers to collect. 'Checking In' routines include checking the communication board, placing diaries and notes in the inbox, completing the emotional thermometer and beginning Independent Learning Time. At 9.00am 'Tuning In' will begin, which consists of an overview of the day, discussing general issues, clarifying learning intentions and Focus Student sharing.

### **Focus Students**

Each Middle Years student will be the Focus Student once a fortnight. This is an opportunity for the students to discuss their learning and thoughts with the class, through guided questions by the teacher. There is a term roster displayed on communication boards.

### **Values and Behaviour**

We expect the best behaviour from every student at all times. In the Middle Years classes we will continue to focus on the school values of respect, achieve, care and responsibility. The Joy project will continue to be used to create positive relationships by teaching the students the skills to be a collaborative and positive member of the school.

### **Healthy Snacks and Water**

Students are encouraged to bring along fruits and vegetables which can be consumed during learning time responsibly. Students can have their water bottles with them during class but they must be used responsibly and filled up at break times only. It is vital for students to drink lots of water, especially during Term 1 when it is hot. Please keep other drinks such as juice and cordial for treats at home.

### **Absentees**

If a student is absent, please send us an email, write a quick note in their diary, phone the school or pop in to explain why. Long absences, such as family holidays, need to be arranged through the Principal. If a student is late to school or needs to be collected early, please sign them in/out at the front office. School attendance is closely linked with academic achievement, therefore it is critical that students are at school and given the best opportunity possible to succeed.

### **Labelling and Covering Personal Items**

Please make sure all personal items such as jumpers, hats and stationery are labelled as soon as possible to avoid any confusion. All books and diaries need to be covered. Plastic book protectors are available in class or you may wish to cover the books in contact.

### Library

Students are able to borrow and return library books during their Independent Learning Time throughout the week. Weekly library visits will recommence once the building works are complete.

### Fitness

Students will require appropriate clothing and footwear for fitness and sport. Fitness is a part of the curriculum and every student will participate daily.

### Edmodo

Edmodo will be used as an ongoing student discussion and sharing forum for the Middle Years classes. It can be accessed from home or school. Reminders, homework tasks and assignments will be uploaded to Edmodo.

### Circle Time

Each Middle Years class will continue to run Circle Time each week. Circle Time links with the Joy Project and is an opportunity for students to communicate how they are feeling, practise empathy and self-regulation skills and gives them the opportunity to discuss issues in a safe environment.

### Learning Environment

All Middle Years classes have been set up as flexible learning environments. You might notice there are stand up tables, rugs, cushions, couches and neutral colours. We are aiming to create learning environments where students feel calm and comfortable and can have a choice in where they learn. Due to the students not having a 'set spot' it is encouraged that each student has a small pencil case with essential items for each lesson, for ease of moving around.

### Diaries

Diaries are used in the Middle Years as a communication tool. They are intended to be used daily and it is expected that students will hand them up every morning for class teachers to check. It would be great if you could check them every day too, as it is a place for us to communicate. Please sign diaries over the weekend for class teachers to check on Mondays. Any notes/slips/money can be placed in diaries and handed in once students arrive at school.

## Curriculum Areas

This year, Middle Years students will be offered learning experiences in the following areas: Mathematics, English, Health and Physical Education, STEM, Science, The Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Japanese and Positive Education. All learning experiences will be taught using our Connected Curriculum model focusing on the big question: 'How can sustainable environments impact the future?'

### The First Few Weeks

During the first few weeks of school, the students will be involved in a variety of learning experiences to encourage and develop a positive classroom environment. They will be involved in team building activities, getting to know other class members and setting up routines.

### English

#### Word Study and Grammar

In Word Study, Middle Years students will be focussing on topic specific vocabulary linking to our Connected Curriculum topic and spelling rules, patterns and generalisations. Each fortnight the students will complete activities from a contract.

### Writing

In Writing this term the students will be setting up their Writer's Notebooks. In the notebooks students will be recording their thoughts and ideas. They will work on developing and extending their thinking, building writing stamina and developing an enjoyment of writing. Once students' notebooks are set up they will explore a range of texts types, play with writing techniques and learn how to use scaffolds to guide their writing.

### Reading

Reading will continue to be a big focus in the Middle Years classes with an initial focus on comprehension strategies through guided reading lessons. Students will select their own reading material for Independent Learning Time and homework. The aim in Term 1 is to foster and develop an enjoyment and appreciation of reading.

### Behind the News

All Middle Years classes will continue to watch Behind the News weekly as part of our English program. Students will have the opportunity to respond to questions and be involved in discussions before, during and after the episodes.

### Mathematics

In Mathematics, the students will cover topics in Number and Algebra, Measurement and Geometry and Statistic and Probability. We will begin the term with tasks to promote positive mindsets in Mathematics and follow with a focus on Measurement. Later in the term we will explore place value and data. Middle Years students will be involved in a range of problem solving lessons and investigations which will require critical thinking and reasoning skills. Lessons will include warm ups, games, hands on activities and purposeful, real-life problems. The aim in Term 1 is to develop a positive disposition to Mathematics in a collaborative environment.

### Connected Curriculum

This term's Connected Curriculum focus is: 'How can sustainable environments impact the future?' We will begin the topic by exploring and unpacking the following learning intentions

1. To identify and classify environmental resources as renewable or non-renewable.
2. To research and analyse sustainable practices at community, national and global levels.
3. To consider and evaluate the impacts of renewable resources.
4. To explore sustainable ways of using renewable resources.
5. To communicate your understanding of what sustainability is, and its presence in the world (ERP – student choice).

Students will then each complete an Education Research Project linking to one or more of the learning intentions. The Education Research Project provides students with an opportunity to learn about a topic of interest to them, whilst still linking to the Australian Curriculum and specific learning intentions.

### Health

In Health this term, all Middle Years students will be investigating cyber safety and wellbeing. Students will identify available resources to provide assistance to health and wellbeing. Students will investigate ways to stay safe when using the internet.

### Visual Arts

Middle Years students will create art works during Term 1 using recycled and reusable resources to link in with our big question for the term.

### Specialist Subjects

Performing Arts, Japanese, P.E., P.E.A.R.L.S. and S.T.E.M. will all be taught as specialist subjects this year. Middle Years students will have two lessons of Japanese per week and one lesson in all other specialist areas.

## Student Leadership

Middle Years students are expected to act as role models for younger students in the school. Students need to start thinking about whether they would like to apply to be a Year 7 student leader or a part of a student action team. Applications will commence soon with more information to come. Later in the year, students will also have the opportunity to apply to be a Sports Day captain.

## Can you help?

If you are available to assist in anyway in the classroom e.g. have talents or resources to share, can listen to reading, work with individuals and small groups, provide transport, help supervise excursions or have ideas to share, please let us know.

It would be appreciated if each student could bring one box of tissues for the class to share. Please feel free to come in and chat at any time about any concerns you have about your child. We are available before and after school most days to speak in person or over the phone. If you would prefer to contact us via email, that is fine too.

## Important Dates

See KPPS Newsletters and Updates  
Year 6/7 Camp Week 2 Term 4