

2019

PRAHRAN HIGH SCHOOL

Q&A - Edition #1



As I engage with the community, I'm collecting many questions.

I will provide regular written 'Q & A' updates to share my responses with you. I hope this is helpful.

Q: Despite all efforts I have not been able to find any information on the catchment zone or enrolment boundary for Prahran - any hints as to where I might find this?

A: I understand there is some anxiety in the community about the Designated Neighbourhood Boundary (DNB) and if you're actually able to enrol at Prahran High School. I want to provide this comfort to you. You're most welcome and I encourage you to be open to this exciting new school opportunity.

All schools have a DNB and they are strictly enforced when schools are at capacity. The DNB hasn't yet been finally defined for Prahran High School yet and regardless of your address, you're most welcome to apply for enrolment for 2019. We have flexibility as we grow our school and we are open to all enrolments in this first year, depending on numbers. My message is, 'If you're interested in Prahran, please continue to engage, as for 2019 all enrolment applications are most welcome'.

Q: I'm curious how the school will populate each year and if the 2019 foundation year will always remain the eldest?

A: Yes, we will enrol a new Year 7 cohort each year and the 'Class of 2019' will be our first graduating class at the end of 2024. The Year 7s who begin with us in 2019 will be our eldest cohort moving through our school.

Q: Will the students at Prahran High School wear a uniform?

A: Yes, we will have a school uniform. The uniform will be carefully designed to reflect the values and intent of our school. The uniform will also visually position our school and students positively and confidently in our community. The uniform will have traditional boys and girls options but naturally, students will have their personal choice of garments, as long as they are official uniform items.

Q: With only a Year 7 cohort next year, will the variety of subjects and extra-curricular activities be limited?

A: No, subjects won't be limited. We are beginning with a Year 7 cohort which gives us a fabulous opportunity to build a school together. These children will have such a great start to their high school years as their learning experience will be personal and tailored. We will teach all Domains of the Victorian Curriculum and we'll also focus closely on the Victorian Curriculum 'Capabilities' especially Critical and Creative Thinking. The buildings are beautifully designed and are built to provide high-level opportunity in the Arts, Science, Technology, Food Tech, Health and PE - as well as the traditional core disciplines. Collaborative learning will be central to all we do. We will plan for a camp, inter-school sports, Arts competitions, and much more.

Q: Will you have a SEAL (Select Entry Accelerated Learning) program?

A: No, we won't have a SEAL program. However, we will plan rigorous and meaningful extension/enrichment programs for students. It will be our commitment to work with students at the level they require and I'll work with staff to build their capacity. SEAL programs can sometimes be a simple streaming mechanism and we'll be individually more responsive than that. For example, individual students may need significant extension in Maths but still have gaps in Literacy. We're best placed to do this work when we take an individual approach, rather than as a whole group. Our collaborative learning spaces will, in time, enable teams of teachers to work with different student group structures.

Q: When will the curriculum be revealed to parents?

A: The curriculum will be developed over the course of this year, but I will have a clear draft outline for you by the next newsletter. We will teach the Victorian Curriculum (Domains and Capabilities) and we will have an explicit focus on collaborative learning. All 'traditional' discipline areas will be taught at Prahran High School but the time allocated to each is yet to be decided. All schools are accountable to the content of the structure of the Victorian Curriculum.

Q: What languages will be offered at Prahran High School?

A: We will teach a language other than English. This is yet to be decided. As I've spent time in our local primary schools, I've explored the languages currently taught with the hope of making some helpful primary-secondary connections. This is difficult (nationwide) as there are so many different languages taught in both primary and secondary schools. At the moment, I'm considering several key possibilities. Happy for your ideas. Again, this will be decided soon.

Q: While there is an area dedicated to PE, what other arrangements is the school looking to establish to facilitate participation in sport? Will there be camps?

A: Yes, we have a fantastic area on the top floor dedicated to Health and PE. There is a gym, as well as an outdoor space. The building itself is also designed to encourage movement within. A number of people have asked about playing fields. We are an inner-urban school and we don't have playing fields but we do have outdoor spaces. We will also use other landmark outdoor and physical spaces like Albert Park, Orrong Park, Prahran swimming pool, NICA to support PE classes and team sport training. Yes, we will have a structured camps program across the school. Many other very successful schools work in this way.

Q: What will inclusion look like?

A: Put simply, inclusion means that every child who attends our school has the right to be at our school and has the right to the very best education possible, at their level. This means that learning support/intervention will be provided for students who require this; it means that extension and enrichment will be provided for students who require this; it means reasonable adjustments will be provided for students who require them; it means that we take a positive, restorative approach to discipline which holds relationships at the centre.

Q: Will the school offer VCAL as well as VCE?

A: I've got a few more years to consider this, but my instinct is that yes, this is likely. However, with the Polytechnic next door, there are also clear opportunities for program sharing in areas like VCAL when we get to that stage of our development.

Q: Will building works be continuing over the next few years? (I fear this will be quite disruptive)

A: No, that isn't the plan. The project is currently 2 weeks ahead of schedule so we certainly hope to be complete ready to begin the new year. However if there are small areas that need finishing touches, it will be minor and as we will have one year level in a school built for at least 650, I don't foresee any issues with building disruption.

I hope this first edition of "Q and A" has been helpful.
Please keep the questions coming and I'll prepare
Edition #2 by Monday 7 May.