

4KM and 4KJ Class Blog Information

Dear Families,

4KM and 4KJ have a new joint blog for both classes to work on and follow this year. We use a blogging platform called *Global2* which is developed and managed by the *Department of Education and Training (DET)* along with Edublogs/CampusPress.

About our blog

If you are unfamiliar with blogs, they are essentially **websites** that are **updated frequently** and allow **reader engagement** through comments.

Our blog address is
<http://4kmand4kj.global2.vic.edu.au>

- Administrators (in our case Miss Jordan and Mrs Morris) can add **posts** which contain class news, learning stimuli and/or work samples.
- Along with posts, blogs contain **pages** with information for our class and parents (eg. links to maths/literacy websites).
- There are icons on the side of our blog called **widgets**, where you can find past posts, recent comments, links etc.

We use our blog to document what is happening in 4KM and 4KJ and to connect with parents and classes around the world.

Why blog?

Miss Jordan and Mrs Morris have had class blogs since 2008 and they've seen so many **benefits for their students**.

One of the fantastic features of blogs is that student work and achievements can be shared with a **wide, authentic audience**. Instead of only the teacher seeing students' creations, parents and students can view selected work and leave comments.

Having a blog helps to strengthen **home-school partnerships** and build a sense of **classroom community**. Is your child ever reluctant to tell you what they're doing at school? Blog posts can be excellent **conversation starters** for your family.

In previous years, Miss Jordan and Mrs Morris have documented clear improvement with students' skills in **literacy, typing, technology, social interactions, cultural understanding** and **geography** through blogging.

Blogging provides the ideal opportunity for students to learn about **appropriate online behaviours** in an ongoing format while getting experience using a range of **digital technologies**.

One of the most rewarding experiences that blogging offers is the opportunity to make **global connections**. We are able to communicate with **blogging buddies** from all over the world and learn from and with them. Blogs flatten our classroom walls!

Safety

Internet safety is of the upmost important to us. Through blogging, the students in 4KM and 4KJ will have the opportunity to learn about **appropriate online behaviours** in an **authentic** and **supervised** setting.

The following guidelines have been established to ensure the safety of our students when blogging.

- Students' first names, photos, work, video and school name **MAY** be included on the blog.
- Student names **WILL NOT** be matched with their photo.
- Students' surnames, address, email address, phone number, specific plans, date of birth and other personal information **WILL NOT** be included on the blog.
- Posts written by students are checked by Miss Jordan or Mrs Morris before they are published on the blog.
- All comments have to be approved by Miss Jordan or Mrs Morris before they are included on our blog.
- Students will be encouraged to comment on other class/student blogs with teacher/parent supervision.
- All students must have parental permission to
 - comment or post on the class blog/other blogs.
 - have their photo, videos and work appear on the blog.
- Parents who leave comments are asked to use their first name only so as not to identify their child. *Eg. Please identify yourself in comments as "Jane – Sally's mum" rather than "Jane Brown – Sally's mum".*
- All commenters must be polite, respectful and courteous.
- Others' work, images, music or videos will not be used without permission and attribution.
- Parents are asked to proofread comments that students write on blogs at home. Please do not let your child comment on blogs at home without supervision.
- All members of the blogging community are asked to let our teachers know if they feel like any of our guidelines have been breached. Our teachers are always willing to remove any students' work/images etc. if requested by parents.

Kathleen Morris, 2017

Classroom Blogging FAQs

Who writes the blog posts?

Only Miss Jordan and Mrs Morris can publish posts on the 4KM and 4KJ blog. The teachers write the posts and the students, parents and other people comment. Later in the year, students may be chosen to write guest posts on the class blog. These will be checked by Miss Jordan or Mrs Morris before they are published.

Who can comment?

Anyone can comment, however all comments are moderated. Miss Jordan or Mrs Morris receives an email every time a comment is submitted. They can choose to publish, edit or delete the comment.

Can students have their own blog?

In 4KM and 4KJ we have a system where students can *earn* their own blog. This will probably occur from Term Two onwards. Students who want to earn their own blog should show a general enthusiasm for blogging and aim to do the following:

- Write quality comments on our class blog on a regular basis.
- Reply to comments on our class blog regularly. Our class blog is a team effort.
- Show an interest in others' blogs (eg. leave some comments on our blogging buddies' blogs).
- Demonstrate an understanding of cyber safety and netiquette when writing blog comments and using the internet.
- Demonstrate support from their family. Students will not be chosen for a blog without family support.

Parents will be contacted for permission if their child is chosen to have their own blog during the year.

How can parents and family members be involved?

We LOVE receiving comments on our class blog from parents and family members. Comment as often as you like! Your comment will always be read and appreciated. Evidence shows a strong correlation between parents' interest in their child's schooling and the child's success at school. Blogging is a great way for parents to be involved in their child's education.

Why do you have a blogging program in your classroom?

As outlined on the previous page, Miss Jordan and Mrs Morris have documented *many* benefits of blogging. In fact, they have not seen another program that provides so many positive outcomes for students. Miss Jordan and Mrs Morris have presented to educators at schools and conferences around the state and world about blogging. Their blogging program has been featured as a "best practice" model in magazines, podcasts and newspapers. It is something they are very passionate about!

How often do you blog? When will my child be blogging?

4KM and 4KJ will look at the class blog most days even if only for a few minutes during a lesson introduction. There will generally be 2-3 new posts on the blog every week. Students will be provided with opportunities in class throughout the week to comment on the class blog. Blogging is not an add-on. It is integrated into our curriculum, eg. we learn might learn about a grammar concept or writing convention through studying blog posts and practising skills in a comment.

Will this blogging program lead to cyber bullying or leaking of personal information?

No. We take internet safety very seriously. In fact, it is one of the reasons we have a blogging program. We moderate everything that happens on the blog and use the platform as a means to educate students about internet safety. This ongoing and authentic method has been recognised as 'best practice' by many experts in the approach to teaching internet safety.

If you have any other questions about the 4KM and 4KJ Blog, please contact Mrs Morris or Miss Jordan.

- Insert email addresses/phone number etc.

Please return the attached permission form ASAP to allow your child to begin their blogging journey!

Don't know how to blog? Don't worry! We will send home more information to help you navigate our class blog soon! We can't wait to start this learning journey with you.