

2014 4B Class Blog Information

Dear Parents,

4B has decided to create a class blog for each class to work on and follow in 2014. We are using a blogging platform called *Edublogs* which is established by the *Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD)*. Edublogs is purely for education with no adult content.

About our blog

If you are unfamiliar with blogs, they are online journals, or a web log. Blogs are essentially websites where administrators (in our case, Miss Tonissen) can add posts which are displayed in reverse chronological order. There are icons on the side, called widgets, where you can find past posts, recent comments, links to other blogs, links to educational websites and more.

We will be using our blog to document what is happening in 4B and to connect with parents and classes around the country and possibly even the world!

OUR BLOG ADDRESS IS:

<http://year4btlc.edublogs.org/>

Blogs are a fabulous way of work and achievements with a wide, authentic audience. Instead of just the teacher seeing the students' work, all of the parents and students can view the work and leave comments. Having a blog helps to strengthen home-school partnerships and build a sense of classroom community. Blogging provides the ideal opportunity for students to learn about appropriate online behaviours and get experience using a 21st century technology. It also reaffirms the importance of giving feedback to others and how to do that in a positive and constructive manner.

Safety

Internet safety is of utmost importance to us. Through blogging, the students in 4B will have the opportunity to learn about appropriate online behaviours in an authentic and supervised setting.

As a class, we have discussed the meaning of a blog and the need for guidelines to focus on safety. Together, we have written the following guidelines to ensure the safety of our students when blogging:

- Students' first names, photos, work, video and school name MAY be included on the blog.
- Students' surnames, address, email address, phone number, specific plans, date of birth and other personal information WILL NOT be included on the blog.
- Posts will not include personal details about students such as addresses and family information.
- All comments submitted have to be approved by Miss Tonissen before they are included on the blog.
- All students must have parental permission to:
 - ~ Have their photo and work published on the blog
 - ~ Comment or post on the class blog/other blogs
- 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.

All students must abide by the blogging rules that we have discussed and agreed upon as a class.

Our blog is a collaborative effort. While Miss Tonissen moderates all comments and posts, please let us know if you think we have overlooked any breaches in our safety guidelines and we will amend it ASAP.

Classroom Blogging

Frequently Asked Questions

Who writes the blog posts?

Miss Tonissen is the only one who can publish posts on the 4B blog. The teacher writes 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 and student blogs may be used to showcase student's work. These will be checked by Miss Tonissen before they are published.

Who can comment?

Anyone can comment, however all comments are moderated. Miss Tonissen receives an email every time a comment is submitted. She can choose to publish, edit or delete the comment. Our class blogs are not accessible through any search engines, eg. Google. The only way somebody can view our blog is if they have the address and type it in themselves, or add it to their Favourites.

How often will we blog? When will my child be blogging?

4B will look at their class blog every day. There will generally be 2-3 new posts on the blog every week. Students will be provided with opportunities in class time throughout the week to comment on the class bog. If they have internet access at home the students may comment from home as well, however this is NOT a requirement, but merely up to each parent's discretion. Students will not be disadvantaged for not accessing the blog from home. Throughout the year, blogging may become part of the students' homework, however if this is difficult for your child, they are free to complete that component at school.

How can parents and family members be involved?

It will be exciting to have family members commenting on our posts. Comment as often as you like! Your comment will always be read and appreciated. Blogging is a great way for parents to be involved in their child's education.

What does a successful blog look like?

4B have used ideas and advice from Mrs Kathleen Morris and Miss Kelly Jordan, from Leopold Primary School, Geelong. Both ladies have blogged with their Year 2 classes for a few years previously, but in 2012 they moved to Year 4. Miss Tonissen and Mrs Hornsby started a class blog in 2012 with their Year 2 classes and you can still see their blogs.

Mrs Hornsby's 2A blog: www.year2atlc.edublogs.org

Miss Tonissen's 2B blog: www.year2btlc.edublogs.org

If you have any other questions about the 4B blogs, please contact Miss Tonissen.

2013 4B

Blog Permission Note

29th November, 2013

Dear Parents,

Please read the attached information note "2014 4B Blog Permission Note" before completing this permission form. This form is *in addition to* the <school name> ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

Please return this permission form as soon as possible so your child can start reaping the rewards of blogging.

Thankyou,

Fiona Tonissen

Year 4B Teacher

4B PERMISSION TO BLOG

4B: <http://year4btlc.edublogs.org/>

I/we _____ give permission for my/our son/daughter
_____ to participate in the 4B blogging program at <school
name>.

I/we understand that:

- Students' first names, photos, work, video and school name MAY be included on the blog.
- 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 Tonissen before they are published on the blog.
- Posts will not include personal details about students such as addresses and family information.
- All comments submitted have to be approved by Miss Tonissen before they are included on the blog.
- All students must have parental permission to:
 - ~ Have their photo and work published on the blog
 - ~ Comment or post on the class blog/other blogs
- 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", not "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.

Signed: _____

Parent/guardian names: _____

Date: _____

Student Blogs:

Digital Portfolios

PARENT INFORMATION

17th October, 2013

Dear parents,

Thank you for returning the permission note from the start of the year indicating that you give permission for your child to be part of the class blog.

The Year Four students are now in the process of setting up their own blog as part of their Genius Hour project. Students will be using their blog as a digital portfolio to document some of the work they're doing at school.

Using a blog as a digital portfolio is very exciting for our students because they can show their friends and family what they're doing at school. Blogs are an excellent way for students to improve their literacy and ICT skills, while learning to be a responsible digital citizen.

Some information about the student blogs:

- We are using Edublogs, which is the Department of Education's blogging platform.
- Miss Tonissen has set up each blog and has administrator powers, the same as the class blog.
- The purpose of these student school blogs is to document learning, not to talk about hobbies etc. (There is an *option* for students to post about things other than learning - see below).
- The students will not be posting identifying photos of themselves on their own blog at school. They will use an avatar and only use their first name.
- We put a strong emphasis on internet safety here at <school name>. This year through our class blog, students have learnt about creating positive digital footprints and not revealing personal information about themselves such as their last name, address, phone number, etc. Having their own online space is a great way for students to put this knowledge into practice.

Working on student blogs at school:

- Students will publish a new post approximately once a week. This will include a sample of their recent work and reflection on what they learnt, especially related to their Genius Hour project.
- Students are the joint administrators of their own blogs (along with Miss T) and are learning to moderate comments they receive etc.

Working on student blogs at home (optional):

- Students are ***not required*** to work on their blog at home, however, they're welcome to with parent approval and support.
- If students do post at home, the topic could be anything they're interested in (eg. a book review, a holiday, pets, hobbies, research, etc).
- ***If students are blogging at home, parents must proofread posts before they are published.***

Learning about blogging:

- If students do wish to learn more about blogging on their own, they can look at the Edublogs help pages which contain step by step guides - <http://help.edublogs.org/>
- A Blogging Open Morning is being held for parents and special friends on Monday the 21st of October - please see your class newsletter for more information.

Any other important information about the student blogs will be provided via our weekly class newsletters.

Thank you,

Fiona Tonissen

4B Teacher & E-Learning Leader