



Curriculum Change

A Different Boat, Serving the Same Passengers, on the Same Sea

A reflection on navigating change with confidence
by Principal Dee Horley and her AfL team at Sandspit Road School

As educators, we are all voyaging across the same sea - the sea of learning. Our mission remains unchanged: to guide our students, our passengers, toward knowledge, growth, and lifelong success. What's changing is the boat we're sailing in - the curriculum. And while this new vessel may look different, the intent behind it is that it is built with care, expertise, and its purpose to better serve the journey we're all on together. Our purpose remains constant: to guide our students through the sea of learning. The recent curriculum refresh from the government invites us to step into a different boat, one that has been redesigned to better navigate the waters ahead. While the vessel may feel unfamiliar, the sea is the same, and our destination (student success) remains unchanged.

What's Changing?

The refreshed curriculum for English (Years 0–6) and mathematics & statistics (Years 0–8) introduces clearer progressions, structured phases, and sequenced learning outcomes. These changes aim to reduce teacher workload, support equity, and ensure that all learners have access to high-quality, coherent learning experiences.

The curriculum is now more knowledge-rich and aligned with the science of learning. It provides a stronger foundation for responsive teaching, helping us focus more on what matters most, engaging with our learners.

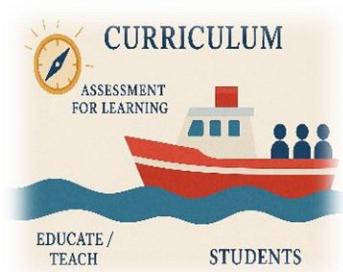
Why the Change - and why the Concern?

It's important to acknowledge that the some of the change has been rapid, especially the recent changes with the English and mathematics curricula. Many educators have expressed concern about whether their voices have truly been heard during the development process. This has led to understandable mistrust and uncertainty around curriculum reform.

As a principal, I share these concerns. Change is challenging, especially when it feels imposed rather than co-constructed. But I also see the potential in this new framework - if we approach it thoughtfully, collaboratively, and with a clear focus on our learners.

Assessment: Setting the Direction of the Boat

One reassuring constant is Assessment for Learning. The key principles - clarity of learning intentions, success criteria, feedback, and student self-assessment - remain firmly embedded in the refreshed curriculum. These elements act as our compass and rudder, helping us steer the boat in the right direction and choose the most suitable route for each learner's journey. Assessment continues to guide teaching decisions, inform progress, and support student agency. It ensures that, even in a new vessel, we remain on course.





Reassurance and Readiness

We are not expected to navigate this alone. There are support materials, professional development, and a phased implementation timeline. English and mathematics begin in Term 1, 2026, with other learning areas following in 2027 and 2028. Consultation remains open until April 2026, giving us time to reflect, respond, and prepare. How we utilise these resources is down to us.

This is a new boat — and yes, it may take time to learn its controls. But we are experienced navigators. We know our passengers, we understand the sea, and we are more than capable of steering this journey with confidence.

Let's keep talking, keep supporting each other, and keep our eyes on the horizon. We've got this.