

HEADSTART

In reviews conducted over recent years, we have found some boarders starting at Wesley find the academic transition a challenge. In some cases the boys experienced gaps in their English and numeracy skills. For some students the introduction of structured homework (PREP) at the start of their time at Wesley is a huge change. This year we are running a new program, *Headstart* to address these concerns. The program is at no additional cost to families and will be delivered over the internet, with the assistance of Year 7 and 8 Boarding Coordinator, Ms Jackie Hunt and Middle School teachers, Ms Wendy White (Mathematics) and Mr Tony McNickle (English).



ABOVE Ms Wendy White, Middle School Teacher, Mr David Bourne, Head of Boarding and Ms Jackie Hunt, Middle School Boarding Coordinator.

GET A HEADSTART

THE HEADSTART PROGRAM

ENGLISH SKILLS

In recognition of the vital part that comprehension plays across the Senior School curriculum, we decided to focus our intervention on comprehension. We aim to assist with this by using a research based online program called *Reading Plus*. This is fully differentiated for each student, targets specific reading skills for each student, supports vocabulary development and trains the eyes to read correctly and at an effective and appropriate rate. Students can select the texts they wish to read (from a large range and at their level) and it motivates all students to succeed and improve. The program will be monitored and we will be able to direct the boys to additional materials (video tutorials and worksheets, includes answers for parents to mark work).

NUMERACY SKILLS

This will be delivered through an online program called *Hotmaths*—the digital program used by Middle School students at Wesley. It offers interactive investigations (widgets), complete lessons and diagnostic tests and assessment activities that can be tracked through the learning management system. This program is curriculum linked and has the ability to be set at a number of levels appropriate to the capabilities of each student.

COMMITMENT FROM THE BOYS

To try and help the boys prepare for academic life at Wesley, in particular the introduction of PREP (structured homework) for five nights per week, we ask the boys to commit to at least two hours per week minimum (one hour each

for the two programs). The boys are free to complete more than this amount too. Ideally, the boys get used to doing this work in the evenings at a similar time to when they would do PREP when they start at Wesley (roughly 7.00 to 8.00pm on Sunday through to Thursday).

The program is optional, but we encourage parents to consider its benefits in preparing their son for his commencement.

