

FOOTSCRAY WEST PRIMARY



Mr BRENDAN MILLAR

Principal

On behalf of the students, staff and community, may I warmly welcome you to our tour of Footscray West Primary School.

Today we will enjoy telling you about many aspects of our school; what we value, our programs, facilities and future plans.

Our school is growing, however we remain firmly committed to maintaining the strong sense that we are part of and an integral aspect of the local West Footscray community.

At Footscray West we focus on developing relationships for the benefit of all. Through our Tribes process we start from day one on building student understanding of our Agreements. They are a central aspect to how we believe students and adults (staff and parents) should interact.

Last year we celebrated our centenary. This was a marvellous reaffirmation of the positive reputation our school has earned over many years. With the collaborative efforts of all, we are strongly focussed on continuing to develop and respond to the changing needs of our community.

Regards,

Brendan Millar

Principal



Mrs LIBBY BUCK

K-P Co-ordinator

At Footscray West Primary School the transition to school is a priority for each child and their family. The prep teachers work cooperatively as a team throughout your child's prep year to prepare them for their school years ahead.

The first year of school is a very exciting time for children and families and we aim to give your child and family a supportive transition from pre-school into school.

We offer a program that allows children to develop socially and educationally and we are regularly evaluating and refining our practices. This approach allows us to maximise our resources to provide the best possible opportunities for every prep student.

At Footscray West we encourage parent participation and community involvement. Whether as classroom helpers, members of our School Council and sub committees, Parents and Friends' and Connector Bugs, there are many of ways to be involved in our school community.

Regards,

Libby Buck

K-P Transition Co-ordinator

WELCOME

Footscray West Primary School is situated in a residential area in Melbourne's inner western suburbs. The current population of approximately 600 children reflects the wide range of social, cultural and economic backgrounds existing within this community.

The school is situated on a substantial site which is well served with playing areas featuring natural and synthetic surfaces, undercover and shaded areas. The facility consists of four main buildings and additional ancillary buildings. Facilities include a library, gymnasium, language room, art/craft room, gallery space, music studio, out of school hour care space and canteen. In addition to our own facilities, the school makes regular use of council parks and local recreation facilities.

F.W.P.S. values learning within a supportive environment, where achievements of students, parents and teachers are encouraged and acknowledged. Our child-centred curriculum is based on the principles of developmental learning and offers a comprehensive education relating to the Australian Victorian Educational Standards (AusVELS).

The school supports the following principles:

- Every child has the capacity to learn
- To develop in students a positive attitude to learning, life and one self
- The achievement of academic excellence
- Effective teaching and learning is achieved through staff working with a co-operative, team approach
- Education is a partnership between parents, staff and students.

Building on a strong foundation of literacy and numeracy, we focus on health and sport education, interpersonal skills, creative expression through visual and performing arts, music and technology to enhance learning, innovation and creative expression. Programs of enrichment and support are provided for children with special needs.

F.W.P.S. focuses on maintaining a happy, nurturing environment for children and is staffed by a dedicated team of teachers and educational support staff. The professional development of staff is a key feature of the school. Parents are an integral and valued part of our school community.

We are proud of how we are portrayed in our community. We recognise the value of interaction between the school and the broader community of West Footscray to provide additional opportunities for our students.

Our school nurtures strong links with local kindergartens, secondary colleges and other primary schools, sports clubs and agencies. Our students represent F.W.P.S. in community events, festivals, sports events as well as state-wide launches and initiatives.

CURRICULUM

Curriculum profile

The *Australian Victorian Essential Learning Standards* (AusVELS) currently provides the curriculum guidelines for the Victorian school system. Foundation Level provides the focus for the prep year of schooling. Learners in their first year of schooling are encouraged to further develop their social skills, such as understanding classroom behaviour and making connections between school and home. Through curiosity and encouragement, they take an interest in learning, begin to learn basic literacy and numeracy skills and develop technical and coordination skills. In 2017 government schools will transition to the *Victorian Curriculum*. In 2016 our teaching staff will strongly focus on developing knowledge and confidence in aspects that will vary from our current curriculum.

Bridge into prep program

The prep staff have worked together as a team, and with local pre school providers, to make the 'Bridge into prep' program suited to our school's needs. During the first part of 2016 the children have begun every morning with an hour session participating in focussed play activities and building relationships with each other and the teachers. This has enabled staff to focus on individual children and their abilities and needs for the first four weeks of the year.

Key foci for students at this level include:

- Building a sense of belonging
- Understanding classroom values and practices
- Making connections between school and home
- Building positive behaviours
- Engaging behaviourally, emotionally and cognitively
- Developing curiosity and intrinsic motivation
- Expressing ideas and feelings through a variety of artistic forms
- Mastering technical skills
- Developing physical capacities and an awareness of their own health needs

Our goal is for students to develop a sense of belonging and socialise in a way where they understand and accept the values and practises of the classroom. This process is aided when students feel socially and emotionally secure and are supported by their peers, teachers and family.

Major areas of academic learning in the prep year are numeracy and literacy. Students in prep participate in literacy and numeracy interviews with their teachers in the first month of school, and the information that is gathered assists teachers in planning curriculum to match students to their learning needs. Both literacy and numeracy are based on the Whole – Part – Whole model, where the teacher initially demonstrates new learning, or revises an aspect of student learning, then allocates students to specific tasks. At the conclusion of the session, the teacher provides opportunities for students to share/ celebrate their new learning with others. prep students will be encouraged to choose 'just right' books and to begin to develop towards becoming independent readers.

Specialist & support programs

A range of specialist programs support the curriculum. These ensure that all students have access to a broad range of curriculum and support programs as required. Each year programs are arranged according to needs and the availability of staff.

In 2016 these include:

Library sessions	Art & Craft	Italian language	Physical Education
Reading recovery	Language support	Music program	PMP (Perceptual Motor Program)

Grade structure

F.W.P.S. has a multi-age structure. In 2016 our Junior school consists of four stand-alone preps , 8 x 1/2 classes, Middle school 7 x 3/4 classes and Senior school 6 x 5/6 classes.

This structure is designed to enhance individual learning through developmental stages. The curriculum is planned and implemented in ways that increase the teacher's awareness of the particular needs of each child. Every child is supported by building upon his/her current skill level and progressing at a rate that is consistent with his/her stage of development.

The style of teaching features the use of problem solving, co-operative learning groups and small teaching groups. Our program is supported by a comprehensive assessment schedule that enables the development and achievements of each child to be closely monitored and recorded. Learning Diaries provide a valuable record of student performance and development.

Our staff work together in co-operative teams to plan and implement the curriculum and monitor the progress of each child. We value the benefits of team work and the program consistency that follows.

Homework

The F.W.P.S. homework policy is in line with Department of Education (D.E.T.) guidelines.

For students in the Junior school, homework will consist mainly of daily reading tasks. Other simple tasks may be set at the teacher's discretion.

In the Senior school, homework will be provided consistently across teams and at each teacher's discretion and may take the form of:

- Daily reading
- Activities designed to reinforce work taught in class time
- Unfinished work to be completed
- Projects

Additional programs

Additional programs are offered at different times to enrich student learning.

Excursions/Incursions: Excursions or visiting groups (incursions) are planned around units of learning being undertaken in the grades. We expect all children to attend these experiences, as they involve lead-up and follow-up learning and are integral to your child's education.

Swimming Program: Our current swimming program consists of a 2 week program for grades 1/2 & 3/4 students during term one and preps in term 3.

Camping Program: Our Outdoor education program provides opportunities for all.

- In Term 4 preps and grade 1s participate in an after school tabloid sports experience.
- Grade 2s have an overnight sleepover at school
- A 3 day experience is offered for our 3/4s
- Grade 5/6s participate in a 3 or 4 day activity camp.

An alternative day program is offered for those who choose not to join the overnight experiences.

Interschool Sports: F.W.P.S. participates in the local primary school district sports competition. Our senior students participate in the summer and winter competition, athletics, swimming and cross country events.

Music Program: In 2016 we were delighted to add a whole school music program for all students in grades prep to 6. This is based on a *Musical Futures* approach (www.musicalfuturesaustralia.org)

In addition, the *Soundhouse Music School* also offers an 'outsourced' instrumental music program in singing and performance, guitar, drums and keyboards for students in grades 1-6. This program has limited spaces and operates on a 'user pays' basis.

Before & After School Care: The out of school hours care for F.W.P.S. is catered for on site by *OSHClub*. Care is provided to all school age children on a permanent or casual basis. Prep children are escorted from the classroom directly to the care of OSHClub staff at the end of the day. For further details, costs or to make reservations, parents should telephone OSHClub directly on 1800 460 870. Our coordinator Alex will briefly attend our information sessions during Term 4 and invite you to visit our facility.

OSHClub Australia

1800 460 870 www.oshclub.com.au

COMMUNICATION

Reporting to parents

Parent/Teacher interviews are arranged twice a year. The first interview, held early in Term 1 is called *Meet the Teacher* and is an opportunity to share information. The second mid-year interview will give you an opportunity to discuss your child's progress with the teacher. Learning Diaries containing evaluation and samples of student work are sent home too. Written semester reports are provided twice per year.

You are welcome to meet with your child's teacher to discuss any matter about which you are concerned, or which you think the teachers should know about. It is important that you make contact with your child's teacher directly, or leave a message with office staff to make an appointment which suits you and your child's teacher.

Support group meetings.

These are held regularly for children who have special needs and require more individualised programs.

Interpreters

A Vietnamese Aide is available to assist parents on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Other assistance is provided by an interpreter service.

Newsletter

All parents are encouraged to register on Tiqbiz to enable access to weekly newsletters and information that maybe only relevant to your child's class. Tiqbiz can be downloaded from the App Store (Apple or Android) and can enable access from tablets, smart phones or computers. A newsletter is posted online each Thursday. This contains up to date information, news and other matters of interest to the school community. This is also available in Vietnamese. The newsletter can also be downloaded weekly from the website www.fwps.vic.edu. Newsletter articles are also archived for parents to retrieve information as required. During term 1, a special prep newsletter is provided.

Online information

A range of information is available online, including newsletters, policies, Tribes, curriculum, hints on starting school, canteen and uniform price lists to name a few.

STUDENT WELLBEING

The staff at Footscray West Primary School work as a team to address the needs of our children.

Children need security and a sense of belonging. The F.W.P.S. wellbeing policy places a major emphasis on ensuring that all our children have the right to feel safe and secure at school. We stress the need for children to fulfil their responsibility to work, play and contribute to school life. Our policy aims to develop an atmosphere of mutual respect for the rights and feelings of self and others, and to foster co operation.

Our school endeavours to provide children with the resilience to be successful in a rapidly changing world. To enhance this, we participate in the 'Tribes' process which enables us to work as a school community, adhering to a set of agreements. These form the platform upon which all our classroom rules, staff/student behaviour and general interactions are based. These agreements are as follows:

- Respect
- Appreciations/no put downs
- The right to participate/pass
- Attentive listening
- Personal best

Anti-bullying policy

Unfortunately 'bullying' can occur in schools as it can occur elsewhere. At F.W.P.S. we have a ZERO tolerance to bullying.

Through student supervision, consequences for bullying, including counselling and the involvement of parents, we endeavour to follow through on these matters.

Since the implementation of the 'Tribes' process in our school we have found our whole school approach has ensured greater expectation and consistency of positive behaviours.

Health & safety

As with all schools, we regularly deal with unwell and injured children. Through our policies and practices we manage issues as they arise in a caring and professional manner with two fully equipped sickbay areas. This may, at times, include making contact with those people families have listed as emergency contact persons.

We follow Department of Education guidelines in the management of serious conditions such as asthma and anaphylaxis. By carefully completing the enrolment form health concerns will be recorded. In such cases there may be a requirement for parents to provide copies of medically endorsed health plans.

PREP INFORMATION

Beginning school will be a major step in your child's life. Some of you will have encountered this experience with previous children, for others it will be a new step.

During the first month of school prep students attend on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. On the day prior to school starting and on Wednesdays for the first month of term 1, the prep teachers make appointments to carry out individual student assessments. Your child will be provided with an hour appointment during this period. At the end of the first month, preps attend during normal school hours of 9.00 – 3.30, Monday to Friday.

Prep children will only be dismissed by the class teacher if a parent or designated carer comes to collect them. Parents are asked to be punctual when collecting their child from school. Should you be unavoidably delayed, please contact the office by 3.20 pm to ensure that this information can be relayed to your child's teacher.

Participate in our transition program

- Join our kindergarten visits
- Attend our picnic
- Come to our information sessions
- Ensure your child attends one or more transition visits in term 4

UNIFORM

Footscray West Primary School has a compulsory uniform policy. Children must wear the uniform each day. The uniform comprises practical items which are ideal for all work or play activities at school. The wearing of the uniform reduces unnecessary competition with others, and gives children a sense of identity. Our uniform is available from Primary School Wear, 58 Westwood Drive Ravenhall, phone 9363 8485, or order online on www.psw.com.au. Generic uniform items in school colours can also be obtained from general clothing outlets. Our school is a *Sunsmart* school. Consequently broad brimmed hats are required to be worn in the yard until the end of April and from the start of September each year.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

At Footscray West Primary School we urge parents to take an active role in their child's learning. We believe in working together to help all children to grow and develop into successful and caring members of the community.

We provide a range of opportunities for you to become involved in classroom support programs. Class teachers and children appreciate your assistance. We provide information sessions and booklets for parents which enable you to gain insight into how children learn, and how the curriculum is taught.

Parents may choose to:

- Be a member of school council
- Join a sub-committee or support group
- Be a classroom helper or assist in specialist classes
- Assist classroom and specialist teachers
- Coach a school team
- Support on excursions or camps
- Assist with special events
- Join one of our other parent groups such as Parents & Friends or Connector Bugs.