Annual Report
School Performance
2015
Contextual Information about Yarralinda School and its history:

Yarralinda School is an independent, non-denominational, co-educational primary school in Mooroolbark; now with an early learning centre for 3 and 4 year olds.

With caring teachers that love their jobs and small class sizes that ensure personal attention, children move confidently through our full and comprehensive curriculum that includes a strong focus on developing independent learning skills. Our school, which became registered in 1990 is located in a quiet setting on six acres of land.

Yarralinda School grew out of the shared ideas of a group of parents who were unhappy with the quality of education at their local schools. They wanted a smaller school that offered a more personal and caring approach to education. They wanted a school that taught their children not only how to learn but how to evaluate and reason with the information they were given. They wanted their children to be in a group that shared and supported a moral code that encouraged good manners and integrity. They wanted an environment that challenged their children to try, investigate and evaluate new things. And above all else, they wanted their children to find enjoyment in learning. From this list of “wants” Yarralinda School was formed.

A core educational philosophy:

The founding parents wanted the school to be built around a core educational philosophy; one that they felt matched their values and ideas about education. They identified the Applied Scholastics educational program as the one that most closely matched their vision.

Applied Scholastics International was founded in 1972 by a group of concerned teachers who were searching for a way to resolve their problems with student learning and classroom management. They discovered Study Technology—a system of educational tools developed by American author and educator L. Ron Hubbard. So effective was this methodology, that these professionals then decided to start an organisation dedicated to sharing it with others. The result was Applied Scholastics. Today, over 40 years later, Applied Scholastics International makes available L. Ron Hubbard’s educational technology on a global scale. It functions through more than 760 affiliates to the benefit of some 100,000 educators and 28 million students.

For over 25 years Yarralinda has found the Applied Scholastics method to have proved itself beyond question. With caring, dedicated teachers and class sizes small enough to ensure personal attention, children move through the school and become graduates who are confident, competent and happy young people who retain their enthusiasm for learning; they then move on to secondary school ready to embrace the next stage of their learning journey.
A Strong Sense of Integrity is Vital:

In a world filled with television, internet, music videos, electronic games, etc., young people are bombarded with conflicting messages from a very young age. It’s easy to see how young people can make poor choices. It is very important therefore, to work at building strong core values as early as possible.

As a school that is inclusive of all denominations and cultures, we encourage the development of such virtues as kindness, tolerance, and respect, as well as persistence, integrity and understanding. Whilst not promoting a particular religious philosophy, Yarralinda School encourages recognition of our spiritual nature.

To achieve the above, Yarralinda School students are taught the principles of The Way To Happiness program. The Way To Happiness booklet is a non-religious moral code based wholly on common sense. It was written by L. Ron Hubbard as an individual work, not as part of any religious doctrine. It covers 21 precepts (rules of behaviour) such as “Honour and Help Your Parents”, “Be Worthy of Trust”, “Set a Good Example” and “Respect the Religious Beliefs of Others” and is the basis of our conduct code for both students and staff.

Students learn age appropriate precepts and are encouraged to apply them at school and in life. In the upper grades, children complete class units on the different principles; in the lower grades, the principles are introduced through everyday examples by the classroom teacher. All students receive Way to Happiness awards for using the precepts in their everyday lives.
At Yarralinda I believe that children should be allowed to experience the world. They should not be wrapped in cotton wool but rather encouraged to become competent. An example in point is the right to climb trees. The rule goes “You can climb the oak tree when you are in grade 3” (to a limited height). A good goal to strive for when you are younger and this also fits common sense considering the environment is at school where we still have a duty of care! Here is a shot of some of the students enjoying themselves!

Christel Duffy
Principal of the best school ever!

Be Competent

A child or adult sees what he himself sees and that is reality for him. True competence is based on one’s own ability to observe. With that as reality, only then can one be deft and sure.

“Operation Christmas Child” was a great success with all classes participating. Each child bought an item for their classroom shoe box which was then sent to needy children through the Good Samaritans Organisation.
Key Student outcomes

Student attendance
The average attendance rate was 93%.
Breakdown by year level:
Any unusual non-attendance was resolved by direct communication with the families concerned.
Grade 1: 90%  Grade 4: 95%
Grade 2: 98%  Grade 5: 89%
Grade 3: 93%  Grade 6: 90%

Proportions of Year 3 & 5 meeting national reading, writing, spelling and numeracy benchmarks - NAPLAN
Year 3: 100%
Year 5: 100%

Professional Engagement

Teacher qualifications
Kristy Nicolaou: Bachelor of Business and Bachelor of Education, Post Graduate Degree in Early Childhood
John Ford: Bachelor of Science, Diploma of Teaching
Laura Robson: Bachelor of Social Science, Graduate Diploma of Education
Elizabeth Deveson: Diploma of Teaching with Honours in Music
Early Learning Centre
Sharon Swartz: Cert 3 in Children’s Services
Dawn Roberts: Diploma of Children Services working towards Bachelor of Early Childhood
Kerry Clark: Diploma of Children Services
Jacqui Wilson: Diploma of Children Services

Post school destinations
Our grade 6 students moved on to:
Melbourne Rudolf Steiner
Ringwood Secondary

Changes in benchmark results from the previous 2 years
Year 3: 100% 0% change
Year 5: 100%

School Staff retention
The proportion of teaching staff retained in the 2015 programme year from the previous year was 100%.

Professional Development
Term 1 Update of Applied Scholastics Study Methods
Term 2 Developing Successful Readers - Scholastic
Term 3 Programs for Students with Learning Difficulties - Arrowsmith
Term 4 Anaphylaxis training and First Aid updates HTLAIM004

School Workforce composition
We have 4 qualified teachers and 4 administration staff; there are no indigenous staff.
Parent, Teacher & Student Satisfaction

We survey our parents, students and teachers through:

- Twice yearly Parent-Teacher discussions
- Additional parent meetings
- Student Self-Assessments, conferencing and class meetings
- Annual Parent Survey and Annual Staff Survey

All parents, students and teachers are encouraged to raise issues or concerns with the appropriate personnel within the school.

We have a very high level of dedication from our staff and have had a low level of concerns or issues raised with school personnel.

Financial Snapshot 2015
Some Highlights of the Year

The year in review saw us ushering in a new era with the opening of our Early Learning Centre, juggling staffing needs until we found our current early childhood educator Kerry Clark. She is a very welcome addition to our team. We also moved our classes around as we said farewell to Laura Robson who has since delivered son number two and is doing a wonderful job as a full time mum. All of our other staff have continued on in their roles with Kristy taking up Laura’s class from the middle of the year.

Our community participated in Remembrance Day activities with a very special talk from our neighbour Ken Parkinson who is a Vietnam Veteran. The children asked many relevant questions and also shared some of their own family histories of the dedication of past family members in the armed forces.

Our annual Harmony Day, which has the goal of creating greater understanding of other’s cultures by sharing food from different countries, was well represented. We had families with links to South Africa, Turkey, Lebanon, India, Canada, Greece, Hungary, China, Taiwan, Thailand, Mexico, Italy, Uganda and of course, Australia.

Our school philosophy embraces a very high content of hands-on learning which means we also like to immerse our students in different environments to broaden their understanding. One such environment which is a favourite of ours is the Heide Museum of Modern Art. It opens our children’s minds to the different forms of art and expression with great exhibitions and artist/educator lead workshops and tours.

Our annual school concert this year was Roald Dahl’s “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs”. The children performed very well and the delightful comedic lines were all pulled off – even some added extras had us all in stitches!

The following pages give you more photos and our term by term list of activities.
A rich and diverse curriculum

In 2015 Yarralinda School worked through all of the key learning areas, incorporating a broad range of external and internal activities aimed at increasing each child’s engagement with the topics covered. We had many activities designed to increase each student’s sense of identity and wellbeing as well as continuing work with the outside community. Below is the list from each term and on the following pages are some of the photo stories.

Term 1
- Sport & Swimming Program - whole school
- Gymnastics Program
- Library
- Urban Orienteering
- Immigration Museum
- Pancake Day - Community fundraising
- Kids in the Kitchen - Food technology
- Harmony Day - Cultural food day
- Maroondah Dam

Term 2
- Sport & Soccer Program
- ANZAC Day activities (including cooking)
- Shrine of Remembrance
- Library
- Kids in the Kitchen - Food technology
- Heide Museum of Modern Art
- MSO (Melbourne Symphony Orchestra) "Classic Kids"
- Responsible Pet Ownership
- RACV Street Scene

Term 3
- Sport and Soccer Program
- Wetlands - Edithvale/Seaford
- All about Hair incursion
- Stripey Emu Chick performance - Darebin Arts Centre
- CERES Community Environment Park
- Yarra Valley Water incursion
- “Build it” Bunnings
- Book Week - met Andrew Plant, author & illustrator of ‘The Poppy’ and dress as your favourite book character
- Melbourne Museum ‘The First People - Our Shared History’
- Kids in the Kitchen - Food technology
- Cooking: Maths - making pizzas
- Cooking: English - sausage sizzle for the sound ‘au’
- Kids in the Lab - Science experiments
- Crazy Hair Day - fundraising for Cystic Fibrosis
- School concert - Roald Dahl’s “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs”
- Mini Golf
- Upper School sleep-over

Term 4
- Sport: Tennis and Soccer Programs
- Swimming Program Prep - Grade 2
- Science Works - Cool Stuff & Sports Works
- Loud Shirt Day in support of the hearing impaired
- Library
- Kids in the Kitchen - Food technology
- National Gallery of Victoria - TROMARAMA
- Children’s Week - Upwey ‘Celebrate Children’ Performance & activities
- Urban Orienteering
- Camp - Swan Hill
- Kids in the Lab - Science experiments
- Teddy Bear’s Picnic - Lilydale Lake
- Kids in the Kitchen - Food technology (Christmas cooking)
- ACE Space
The Upper School students set off Monday morning bound for sunny Swan Hill. They boarded the V-Line train at Southern Cross Station and headed to Bendigo, where they then boarded a coach to complete their journey. After arriving mid afternoon, they settled into their accommodation and went off on an exploratory walk.

Tuesday’s adventures started at the Pioneer Settlement, making butter, washing clothes ‘old style’ and learning how a letter press works.

They then moved on to a local art gallery and explored an exhibit by regional schools VCE Art finalists.

The hot day was ended with a cooling dip at the local pool!

So far today they have spent time in the old School House, learning about the Cane! Ouch!!! They have built a pig pen, made some rope, made peg dolls, learnt how to use a 2 person long saw & all about mallee roots.

They are enjoying some free time at the moment and will then head off to the pool to cool off again!

Feedback so far

“Best Camp!” “Food is Great!”

“My mum would love this!”
Continuing on with the week long camp in the very sunny & hot Swan Hill, the students went on the Paddle Steamer ‘Pyap’ and got a true sense of the scope of our great Murray River. They had a fascinating aboriginal history lesson with a mock corroboree and handled weapons and tools. A drive in a 1924 Dodge was very comfortable but a stay in the gaol was not! They learnt about clothes you would wear and we had a great group shot done.

We learnt about Morse Code and Burke & Wills and had olden day games as our last activity on Friday before the train trip home.

The friendships, the immersion in all that we saw, our enthusiastic educator, Glynnis, made the camp a great success. Also ending off three hot days with a cooling dip, plus a great water slide at the local pool was perfect.

Enjoy the photo’s!

Christel – Principal of the best school ever!!
Welcome to the last term of the year. For this term we have been participating in sea themed activities. This originated from a lot of the children going to the beach, swimming and visiting the aquarium over the holidays. We have created an 'under the sea' wall and have learnt a lot about the creatures we made. We have also been engaged in lots of water play which included experimenting with things that float and sink and then later on weighing the items on our scales.

Water safety has been another part of our learning, with the children gaining an understanding of being safe around water.

We celebrated Diwali on the 11th November, making lanterns, listening to traditional music and dancing with bright coloured material. It is wonderful for the children to learn about diversity and other cultures.

Diwali (or Deepavali, the “festival of lights”) is an ancient Hindu festival celebrated in autumn (northern hemisphere) or spring (southern hemisphere) every year. Diwali is one of the largest and brightest festivals in India. The festival spiritually signifies the victory of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, good over evil, and hope over despair. Its celebration includes millions of lights shining on housetops, outside doors and windows, around temples and other buildings in the communities and countries where it is observed. [3][4]

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diwali

The older children have started their school transition and have shown confidence with their orientation so far. During this time we have also been welcoming our new children for their orientations into the ELC.

**Dates to remember:**
11 December—term ends at 2:30pm (3pm for students on the bus run)