

Mount Evelyn Primary School

'Learning for Life'

Mission

To prepare the children of Mount Evelyn Primary School for fulfilling and productive lives in a rapidly changing world; and encourage them to develop a lifelong love of learning.

Vision

Mount Evelyn Primary School, with the active support of its community, maximises the intellectual, social and emotional potential of its students by providing engaging, challenging and inspiring learning developed by highest quality professional teams.

Values

With the principle of integrity at our core, the important values of caring, respect and responsibility (for self and others) are central to our school. With these core values we seek to create a sustainable school climate, where excellence is promoted, enjoyment of school life is highly valued and there is a deep sense of community and of belonging.

Mount Evelyn Primary School Philosophy

Mount Evelyn Primary School is a progressive school that is evidence-based and responsive to emerging understandings of childhood development and student learning. Our approach seeks to ensure that every child is fully engaged in their learning and supported to develop the knowledge and skills needed for a rapidly changing world.

Increasingly, the School's agreed philosophy reflects a developmental, child-centred approach. This approach is characterised by being responsive to each child's individual needs, talents and interests; whilst challenging children to strive for excellence in all that they do. The school seeks to educate the whole child, including providing active support for their social and emotional development.

Whilst literacy and numeracy are our core learning foci, the school also places high importance upon learning in the humanities, arts, science, technology, physical education and languages. The school's highly developed inquiry-based learning approach also incorporates high-order thinking, problem-solving and the use of information and communications technologies. Enrichment and support programs are also a key part of responding to the range of student needs.

The School seeks to maintain a rich physical learning environment, which is seen as pivotal for highest quality learning.

Highest quality teaching is also seen as critical to effective learning. We are committed to our teachers undertaking continuous professional learning to enhance their skills; and ensuring that they plan and work together in professional learning teams to ensure both consistency of approach and shared expectations.

We believe that it 'takes a village to raise a child' and at Mount Evelyn Primary School high importance is placed upon strong partnerships with parents and the wider community; seeking to involve them in all aspects of school life. We seek to build relationships and create a real sense of belonging, involvement and working together, in order to support children to reach their full potential.

The school's philosophy is supported by adherence to agreed key principles in the areas of learning and teaching, leadership and management, student wellbeing and community engagement.

Mount Evelyn Primary School Principles for Learning and Teaching

Educators' knowledge of children's competence is crucial to providing positive experiences and a safe and stimulating environment that will encourage children to work at the edge of their capabilities, so guiding them to expand their competencies and deepen their understandings.

Child- Centred Developmental Approach

- The curriculum and teaching approaches of the school are designed to be child-centred and developmentally appropriate.
- We believe that children's needs are best met in a multi-age structure where children have the opportunity to move from being the youngest to the oldest in the group; and that gives students the opportunity to work and associate with others on the basis of skills, abilities, interests, personality and age.

Inquiry-based

- Inquiry-based learning creates a learning environment that stimulates thinking, nurtures creativity and promotes active learning.
- An approach focused on inquiry and problem-solving provides an integrated framework and context for authentic and explicit teaching, particularly of literacy and numeracy.

Individualised and differentiated learning

- Our approach acknowledges individual differences and ensures that whilst there are high expectations of each child, there is also success for all.
- Diagnostic assessment used to inform teacher planning plays a pivotal role; and the use of flexible student groupings supports teachers responding to individual student needs.
- Open-ended tasks provide the opportunity for each child to be challenged to the extent of their individual capabilities.

The whole child

- Whilst intellectual, or cognitive growth, is essential, so are social and emotional development, particularly the building of positive relationships and sustaining of self esteem. Planning for learning includes explicit planning for all of these domains.

Engaging, authentic learning

- Learning experiences are planned to be authentic and purposeful. This requires the creation of a rich and engaging learning environment.
- As part of becoming lifelong learners in the modern world, children must also become effective users of information and communications technology through their regular use in school learning.

The importance of feedback and being data informed

- Diagnostic assessment for planning of learning is critical to ensuring accurately targeted teaching.

- Identification of individual student's needs, talents and interests and the effective use of feedback are seen as essential for the development of agreed learning goals.
- A detailed understanding of all evidence and data available is seen as essential for continuous school improvement.

Mount Evelyn Primary School Principles for Leadership and Management

Leaders must take responsibility for shaping the future, developing a unique school culture and sustaining partnerships and networks both within and beyond the school. School leaders will be effective only when they think and plan strategically, align resources with desired outcomes and hold self and others to account. Leaders must also advocate for all students, develop effective relationships and develop individual and collective capacity. Our leaders must shape teaching approaches (pedagogy), ensure a focus on achievement and promote inquiry and reflection. Aligning actions with our shared values is a pivotal role.

School Leadership Team

- The School Leadership Team seeks to achieve a professional and coordinated approach to structures and processes.
- The School Leadership team must ensure that the necessary resources – personnel, physical and financial resources – are available to fully support the agreed learning and teaching program.
- Effective management of staff performance and ensuring links to continuous professional learning are key roles for the School Leadership Team.
- Promotion of everyone as a leader with influence is a key strategy at our school.

Professional Learning Teams (PLTs)

- Teachers work in small, highly collaborative teacher teams that are purposeful, with a clear focus upon student learning.
- Leadership of our Professional Learning Teams must be of the highest calibre.
- Professional Learning Teams seek to ensure shared understandings, have a focus upon relevant data, share and reflect upon classroom practices, apply research and best practices and work to improve their teamwork and collaboration skills.
- Teams undertake reflective practice including gathering information that informs and enriches decision-making.

Mount Evelyn Primary School Principles for Student Engagement and Wellbeing

Educators attend to children's wellbeing by providing them with warm, trusting relationships; predictable, safe environments; and affirmation and respect for all aspects of their being: physical, emotional, social, cognitive, creative, linguistic and spiritual. By acknowledging each child's identity, their cultural and spiritual worlds, and responding sensitively to their emotional states, educators build children's confidence, sense of wellbeing and willingness to engage in learning.

Building and supporting a positive school culture

- Recognising that students will reach their full potential when they are happy, healthy and safe and when there is a positive school culture to engage and support them in their learning.
- Creating a positive school culture that is fair and respectful and reflects the school values
- Recognising that social and emotional wellbeing and school engagement and connectedness underpin effective student learning and behaviour.

Building and supporting positive relationships

- Building positive, supportive and respectful relationships that value diversity.
- Proactively engaging with parents and care givers to enrich the learning environment and school community
- Appreciating and using the potential strengths and expertise of community members

Promoting student responsibility

- Student taking personal responsibility for participation in their learning.
- Students feeling valued, empowered and cared for, have meaningful opportunities to actively participate in the school and their learning and can effectively engage with their learning.

Responding to individual student needs

- Recognising the unique characteristics, interests abilities and needs of each child.
- Engaging, inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs of all students
- Ensuring all children receive the support they need.
- Implementing coordinated preventative and early intervention approaches

Supporting transitions

- Recognising the significance and challenge of transitions at all levels and preparing children for them

Mount Evelyn Primary School Principles for Community Engagement

Consistent with our school philosophy that 'it takes a whole village to raise a child', these principles focus upon the importance of all stakeholders in ensuring that our children learn and grow.

Family Centred practice

- Placing high importance upon building strong partnerships with parents and the wider community in recognition that the best educational outcomes are achieved when schools and families work together.
- Recognising and respecting the pivotal role of families in children's learning and development
- Openly and proactively engaging all parents as equal partners in their child's education, being responsive to them as partners in learning.
- Fostering participation, contribution and high expectations
- Including and celebrating all members of the community

Strong partnerships

- Establishing strong connectedness to, appreciation of, and active partnerships with, the wider community
- Ensuring a collaborative approach and shared responsibility with other professionals in the community
- Developing shared expectations