

## About Our School

Ripponlea State School No. 4087 was opened on 3 July 1922. In the nearly 100 years since, Ripponlea Primary School has undergone numerous transformations yet two key characteristics have remained constant: a dedicated and enthusiastic school community; and a commitment to high expectations for the achievement, engagement and wellbeing of all our students.

The following statement provides an insight into our Values and Vision and our approaches to Teaching and Learning, and Reporting and Assessment.

### Values and Vision

Ripponlea staff and students have an agreed set of values. They are:

**Community Creativity Integrity**  
**Open-mindedness Resilience Respect**



At the beginning of each year, classes define what these values look like in their learning spaces and staff create expectations for how they model these values.

Our vision is for the children of Ripponlea to be global and creative thinkers who are empowered with the skills and empathy to engage with an ever-changing world. They **care**, they **create**, they **connect**.

### Personalised Learning

Ripponlea Primary School is committed to providing a personalised learning program for all of its students, encouraging students to aspire beyond their potential. *'We work hard to make sure our students are at the heart of everything we do.'*

### Student Engagement

Our learner-centred approach is led by dedicated and committed teaching staff who create an environment where students are motivated, curious, optimistic and engaged in their learning.

Focusing on a three-tiered approach that covers behavioural, emotional and cognitive development, we promote student engagement by actively encouraging:

- students to build and nurture strong relationships with their peers and teachers;
- a strong partnership between parents and the school to collaboratively provide our students with a positive environment in which they can develop and learn;

- students to create learning goals, monitor their progress towards achieving these, working together with the teacher to determine what they need to learn and to do in order to improve;
- students to enjoy learning by providing them with authentic opportunities to connect with real life contexts and participate actively in classroom activities;
- a 'student voice' for students to have their say and share their ideas and thoughts for school improvement through student circle meetings and opportunities for student leadership.

## **A Tailored, Differentiated Approach**

As a small school, our friendly and caring culture ensures that each child is known to all the staff. We believe each student is unique and has skills, aptitudes, aspirations, talents and interests. We value individuality and support the development of respect, resilience, open-mindedness, integrity, creativity and community.

We cater for differences in a differentiated classroom program within the Victorian Curriculum framework. At Ripponlea, the learning program is tailored to the needs of all students, to best support them to flourish both academically and socially. We use assessment to inform and direct teaching, monitoring the progress of all students. With high expectations and rigorous monitoring of the impact of learning, entry points are designed by teachers and students themselves within a range of flexible learning spaces.



## **A Team Structure**

Ripponlea Primary School operates multi-age classes for Years 1 through 6. Foundation operates as a single year level. This structure enables us to maximise and enhance curriculum delivery, team planning and school space.

There is a strong emphasis on shared planning and teachers work in teams to deliver programs that take each student's academic learning forward from their point of need. Teachers use common vocabulary to explicitly inform students of the learning intentions and success criteria to clearly define the purpose and expectations of the activities provided.

Our teachers develop a repertoire of organisational structures that incorporate whole level, class, group and individual teaching to accommodate the paces of learning, acknowledging that children learn at different rates.

Our multi-age classes invite a range of benefits in terms of social learning and building relationships. Younger children get to learn from and emulate older children and the older children benefit from the mentoring and leadership roles they develop with the younger children. The yearly rotation between the younger and older age groups within the class creates a wonderful dynamic, offering opportunity to make new friends and strengthening the spirit of cooperation, tolerance and community that we pride ourselves on at Ripponlea.

## Flexible Learning Spaces

An important feature of our approach to learning at Ripponlea is the way we have designed our flexible learning spaces to create vibrant, welcoming and supportive environments that are *flexible to the learning needs of our students*.

Classroom layouts and furniture are designed to support flexible and purposeful use of classroom spaces, providing students with choice of environments to suit contemporary learning styles which include collaboration and group discussions.

Our round tables, beanbags, couches, standing tables and moveable chairs can be rearranged to best suit the variety of activities and experiences students engage in. This versatility also allows for easier rotation between activities and groups, and allows teachers to move freely to support students in their learning.



Flexible learning spaces support the team approach to teaching, making it easy for teachers to collaborate and students to work together and to experience a variety of teaching styles and mentoring. Having multiple teachers in a flexible space also enables students' individual needs to be more effectively supported.

## Learning Programs

Ripponlea's rich learning environment empowers each student with an understanding of their own strengths and skills, helping them develop strategies to extend on their successes. This includes teaching students to understand how they learn, take personal responsibility for their learning, self-reflect for improvement and set goals to maximise their learning outcomes.

Teachers provide a stimulating, comprehensive and challenging curriculum based on the [Victorian Curriculum](#). The Victorian Curriculum describes skills and standards students are expected to know and achieve from Foundation to Year 10. **Literacy** and **Numeracy** receive the greatest time allocation within the school week. Specialist and class teachers work together to ensure students make connections across all areas of the curriculum.

**Specialist classes** are provided in:

- **Visual Arts**
- **Performing Arts/Music**
- **Languages – Italian**
- **Physical Education**

In addition to the core curriculum, Ripponlea provides extensive [extracurricular activities](#) to enhance the learning outcomes for students, provide opportunities to discover new interests and skills, and offer students cross-age learning experiences in a fun and relaxed environment. Exciting excursions, incursions and special event days stimulate and motivate each child in their learning as well as helping students to engage with the wider community, broadening their inquiry and developing their social skills.



## Inquiry Learning

Student skills and attitudes are further developed through relevant, challenging and engaging inquiry into global concepts and real-world questions. **Inquiry Learning** enables students to develop an understanding of 'big picture' concepts by questioning, researching, analysing, presenting and sharing their learning. Students learn to be critical and reflective thinkers, extending their knowledge and ethical and intercultural capabilities.

## A Culture of Thinking

Ripponlea values collective and individual thinking as being visible and actively promoted as part of regular, day-to-day learning. Staff use their knowledge of cultural forces that define our classrooms to regard thinking as more than an add-on activity or part of a lesson. Through thinking routines, tools and structures are provided for students to make connections, consider different viewpoints and use reasoning with evidence.

## Digital Technologies

Access to **eLearning** resources is fundamental to learning and teaching at Ripponlea. Mobile notebooks and iPads are networked and have internet and intranet access. We emphasise Cybersafety across all levels of the school. Ripponlea understands the importance of using digital technologies effectively, from basic skills such as how to access electronic resources, to managing files and data, to specialised learning in coding, the language of computers.



## Home Learning

Ripponlea supports the need for students to have a balanced lifestyle which includes time for family, sport, recreation and cultural pursuits. We do not issue formal, regular homework; instead we ensure learning at home is purposeful and appropriate to the student's skill level and age. Home

Learning mainly consists of daily reading to, with, and by parents/carers or older siblings or independently. It may include the extension of class learning by practising skills or gathering of extra information or materials.

## **Assessment and Reporting of Learning**

Feedback and reporting at Ripponlea is timely and credible. Assessment and reporting are vital processes that provide information about what students know and can do, allowing teachers to make recommendations for their future learning.

Ripponlea presents clear learning intentions and success criteria to students to make the focus of their learning explicit. Learning intentions are written as statements to describe what the students will know, understand and be able to do as a result of their learning. Success criteria are given to help students know how and when they have achieved the learning intention.

Staff at Ripponlea view assessment as an ongoing process. Data is gathered through the National Assessment Program and school-wide assessment tools to monitor student progress, analyse results and reflect on evidence to make informed and consistent judgement to improve future learning.

Improved student learning comes from assessment which is *for learning* (informing what is to be learned), *as learning* (when students reflect on progress to set future learning goals), and *of learning* (where evidence of student learning is measured against goals and standards).

Teachers provide ongoing feedback to students about their learning. Children and parents attend informal and formal discussions to identify successes and strategies for improvement. Written reports are published bi-annually which describe how far a student has progressed during the year compared to the relevant standards.