



Tarwin Lower Primary School

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## Educating the Whole Child

Each student enters school **healthy** and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle



Each student learns in an environment that is physically and emotionally **safe** for students and adults



**Tarwin Lower Primary School**

Each student is actively **engaged** in learning and is connected to the school and broader community

Each student has access to personalised learning and is **supported** by qualified, caring teachers

Each student is **challenged** academically



# Educating the Whole Child

## INTRODUCTION

The world our students will enter into as adults will require them to think both critically and creatively, evaluate massive amounts of information, solve complex problems and communicate well. A strong foundation in reading, writing, maths and other subjects is still needed; however, this alone is not sufficient for lifelong success.

What is needed to be a successful learner?

- A student who enters school healthy and safe and is ready to learn
- A student who feels connected to school is more likely to stay in school
- A student who has access to challenging and engaging academic programs is better prepared for further education, work and civic life

We believe the five components of Educating the Whole Child should work together, not in isolation. At Tarwin Lower Primary School, we deliver a balanced approach to education, to better prepare our students for their future.

## **Each student enters school *healthy* and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle.**

Students do better at school when they are emotionally and physically healthy. They are more engaged, able to concentrate for longer periods of time and achieve higher results.

At Tarwin Lower Primary School, we believe that the health and wellness of the students is the key to school success. The students have access to;

- Physical Education lessons
- Sporting programs funded by Sporting Schools Victoria
- Free swimming lessons for the whole school
- Healthy school lunches each Friday, prepared by parents and students
- A vegetable and herb garden
- Chickens
- Grade cooking classes, in which students prepare healthy fresh food from the vegetable garden
- Gardening
- Free healthy breakfast program
- Fresh fruit from the variety of fruit trees growing in our school grounds
- Large natural setting in which students play and learn
- School values reflect the importance we place upon good mental and emotional health

## Each student learns in an environment that is physically and emotionally *safe* for students and adults.

Feeling safe at school translates to higher academic achievement, increased student well-being and greater engagement.

At Tarwin Lower Primary School, we have a school climate of acceptance and support.

- Tarwin Lower Primary School is proud to be a part of the **Kids Matter Program**, which aims to enhance students' resilience, optimism, confidence, and social and emotional skills. Students with higher resiliency are more likely to thrive in learning and achieve greater educational outcomes.
- We create friendly and caring school communities through the **Better Buddies** program. This is an initiative of The Alannah and Madeline Foundation, which helps students entering their first year of primary school to feel safe, valued and connected to the school community. The school pairs new primary school students with an older buddy.
- Social and Emotional Learning is taught through the 4Rs Curriculum (Rights, Responsibilities and Respectful Relationships). Students have weekly lessons to develop a stronger sense of wellbeing and learn strategies to be more resilient, confident and successful.
- The school well-being survey showed students at Tarwin Lower Primary School felt safe at school.
- Whole school Buddy Reading program. The benefits include increased academic skills, improved social skills, increased self-esteem and well adjusted students.
- Whole school activities.
- The school values, of Kindness, Cooperation, Resilience, and Respect, are visible, promoted and celebrated around the school.

## Each student is actively *engaged* in learning and is connected to the school and broader community.

To learn at their best, students must be engaged and motivated. Students who are valued by adults and a part of their school, perform better academically and have positive social attitudes, values and behaviour.

At Tarwin Lower Primary School, we actively engage students by;

- Teaching a well-rounded, hands on curriculum that is integrated with the arts, health and wellness.
- Weekly classes of Music, Library, PE, Indonesian and Art.
- Class lessons are focused around a topic each term, for example, Sustainability, Indigenous Studies, Biology.
- Lessons have a real-life application. The lessons are engaging and meaningful.
- Students are taught through an inquiry-based learning approach. Students in the senior classes are able to choose an area of interest to research further and how to present the information.
- Students set a learning goal each term, choosing an area they would like to improve upon and how will achieve success.
- Student achievement is regularly monitored and differentiated instruction is given to support the learning for all.
- Members of the community are invited into the school to share their knowledge. For example, talks on multiculturalism, animal rescue, and gardening.
- Community members support students with their literacy.
- Junior School Council represents the students so they have a voice. Each year the Junior School Council lead the school in a project, that aims to improve lives, change attitudes or enhance communities. Students are encouraged to develop leadership, organisation, confidence and empathy. Student voice and empowerment are powerful ways of increasing resilience.
- Participating in the annual Clean Up Australia Day, picking up rubbish next to the river and caring for their community
- Taking the Prep students for a Teddy Bears Picnic at the local park.
- Visiting the local shops.
- Annual Graduation and Christmas Concert at the local Football and Netball Rooms.

## **Each student has access to personalised learning and is supported by qualified, caring teachers.**

We are a supportive school. All members of staff are caring and take a personal interest in each student and the success of each student. Our caring learning environment focuses on positive student-teacher relationships, students' social and emotional needs and high expectations.

- The qualified teachers at Tarwin Lower Primary School are caring, encouraging, personable and high-quality.
- We provide personalised and nurturing learning experience for all students.
- Students take ownership of their own learning by setting their own **personal learning goals**. Students becoming active participants in the learning process, empowering them to become independent learners, and motivating them to achieve their full potential. Students who set their own learning goals have more confidence to take on more challenging tasks, regardless of their ability. Their motivation to improve and master a task is improved and their self-esteem remains strong, even in the case of failure.
- Students are taught about fixed and growth mindsets and the power of "Yet". Students are encouraged to use the word yet to reflect on their learning. "I don't know this **yet**," leaves room for change, "I'm no good at this **yet**," leaves room for improvement.
- Our focus on social and emotional learning helps students to develop their awareness of their emotions, interpersonal skills, maintain positive relationships, and demonstrate decision making and responsible behaviours for success in school and life. This in turn improves students' social and emotional development, readiness to learn, classroom behaviour and academic performance.
- Teachers continuously undertake professional development to support the needs of the students and improve their learning.
- All the teachers know the students and their families well.

## Each student is *challenged academically*.

At Tarwin Lower Primary School, we believe that higher-level thinking, communication and problem-solving skills, as well as knowledge of the world and its people, are the pathways to success.

- We provide a curriculum that challenges students to work harder as they investigate a wide range of real-world subjects.
- Classwork is differentiated for all students, to ensure they are working at their level, whilst striving to improve.
- Teachers have high expectations of all students. They take an active role in supporting and monitoring student progress. They communicate expectations about achievement levels and provide students with stimulating intellectual challenges.
- Teachers are committed to helping students achieve in the core subjects. Students participate in a minimum of 5 hours of mathematics per week and a minimum 10 hours of literacy per week (writing, reading, spelling, phonics and handwriting).
- Students are taught life skills that prepare them for active engagement in their community, such as;

**Collaboration:** Students are able to work effectively with diverse groups and exercise flexibility in making compromises to achieve common goals.

**Creativity:** Students are able to generate and improve on original ideas and also work creatively with others.

**Communication:** Students are able to communicate effectively across multiple media and for various purposes.

**Critical thinking:** Students are able to analyse, evaluate, and understand complex systems and apply strategies to solve problems.

In our schools' classroom, yesterday's rows of quiet listeners have given way to small groups of active learners, thoroughly engaged in discussions and explorations. The teacher is not standing front and centre delivering instruction, they are on the move, observing, asking questions, and guiding students to make their own sense of the world. The classroom walls have expanded, with technologies connecting students to the wider global community. The internet has opened access to a vast world of information, and students are learning critical-thinking skills to filter out the noise and decide which sources are reliable, which information to trust. This means students need to master new technologies and also learn to navigate online communities safely and responsibly. In our fast-changing world, more of the same knowledge and skills will not address the challenges of the future.