

# Belmont Primary School...2020



# Annual Report



Locomotive C



1898



2021

## **Mission Statement –**

To create a vibrant learning community to provide students with the skills, knowledge and attitudes that will enable them to become lifelong learners and contributing members of society.

## **Purpose:**

Our aim is to provide students with the skills, knowledge and attitudes that will enable them to become lifelong learners and contributing members to society.

This statement is built upon the following set of beliefs

- The relevance and importance of the individual nature and needs of each child
- The child is an active partner in the learning process
- That cooperation and collaboration are essential elements for learning

## HISTORY

In the year of 1896, several Belmont families applied to the Education Department for the establishment of a local government school. Children from the families of Towtons, Sugars, Stanley, Keen, Robinson, Le Page, Hawthorn, Jibbery, Risley, Osborne, Gibbs, Pridmore and Randell were to be the first beneficiaries of the new institute.

The first school was opened in an existing hall, which was controlled by the Wesleyan Trustees and its teacher, Mr W.R. Dalrymple, resided in the two rooms, which adjoined the school hall. Later on that year, the government bought an acre from the Saunders for 100 pounds, which is the nucleus of today's Belmont Primary School. It took a year to complete the construction of the new two-roomed school, but the teacher continued to reside at the old Wesleyan Hall for ten shillings a month until new quarters were also built.

Mr H.R. Havill replaced Dalrymple as head teacher in 1899 and extracts from the school journal give us an insight to school days around the turn of the century. Attendances varied dramatically and an epidemic of diphtheria was the main cause for keeping children away from school in mid-1908. The appointment of a school monitor later that year helped bring a more systematic approach to school work before another outbreak of diphtheria and influenza caused disruption to the classes again.

The new school year of 1909 opened with a roll of 76 pupils and it was noted that their attitude to classes was showing an improvement. A library was now in full swing, but again the attendances were disrupted with outbreaks of measles, flu, diphtheria and typhoid, and the appearance of the grounds was savaged by wandering cattle.

The Forestry Department gave a gift of trees to adorn the grounds, but another band of cattle came through and destroyed them.

Mr Andrewartha took over as head teacher in 1911 and noted that the children were generally well-behaved and teachable, but not keen on work. Illnesses struck again, the teachers were absent a lot and class attendances dropped from 103 to 32.

When World War One broke out the schools teacher's quarters had deteriorated and were abandoned. The children were collecting up to eight shillings a week to help wounded soldiers and a holiday was announced so they could watch a military parade through the streets of Perth.

By 1917 the school badly needed repairs, especially to the drainage which almost had the buildings sitting atop a swamp. But the children's spirits were high on their efforts to help during wartime. After the war, all the children received Peace Commemoration medals

Whooping cough and diphtheria caused more illness in 1920 and the school organised fresh vegetables and eggs for donation to the children's hospital. Concerns were also raised by a compulsory officer who visited the school, wishing to discuss education and employment issues of children who worked in the racing stables.

During the years more land was added to the site, but it took the efforts of people like dancing and deportment teacher, Miss Doris Melville, and a local parent, Mr Joseph Ellard, to volunteer themselves in raising funds for the run-down school.

By 1928 a dedicated group of volunteers had formed and more than 500 pounds was raised for improvements. Senior pupils also gave their time to clear the grounds and plant the grass that has since been enjoyed by many generations of children.

Visual education had gained popular support from parents and a hall was set aside specifically for this purpose.

The P&C Association raised funds to convert the old teacher's quarters to another classroom in 1932, and then years later a new room was added to the main school.

In 1949 Treasury approval was given for 10,500 pounds to be spent on further additions, which included the modern convenience of a septic tank system.

The Rivervale School was built in 1907 and Redcliffe in 1908, but the Belmont Primary School is the only survivor of that era - a thriving institution that is a far cry from its humble origins.

*(Excerpt from 'Belmont Heritage Series' article by Ann Spalding,*