

A shared initiative of an active Castlemaine parent group and a local primary school interested in exploring innovation.



"We see ourselves and our children as life-long learners able to adapt to, and generate change in the world."

- Andrew Kohane (parent)



## A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

(A shared sense of learning partnerships)

- In building a sense of belonging, students, teachers & parents work together as equal partners in an environment that is respectful, values diversity and is safe & welcoming.

- Our learning community is part of a social network that reflects the evolving values of a democratic classroom.

- The community class holistic model incorporates the Winters Flat **SPACE** concept which nurtures the **Social, Physical, Academic, Creative** and **Emotional** child.



## HOLISTIC LEARNING

(Creating engaged & energised learners & incorporating a Reggio Emilia approach)

- The holistic approach has included complementary ideas of Steiner, Reggio Emilia, community school movements and environmental education. It makes connections with ethics and social justice.

- Together parents, students and teachers plan integrated units & projects using the holistic learning wheel as a creative tool.

- Reggio Emilia philosophy values the child in many forms (100 languages - Loris Malaguzzi) through documentation, pictures, observations, journals & planned learning projects. Students become even more involved as they contemplate and form their own ideas.



## A LIVING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

(Our environment is precious)

- Through a conscious use of space, design, colour, light, attention to detail and displays of children's work, the environment serves as a further teacher.

- A rich classroom environment, incorporating beauty, music, eurhythmics & craft. Involving the community in the construction of a verandah, lead-lighting, straw bale seating, mosaics & gardening.

- Seasonal excursions that enable children to discover the wisdom and beauty reflected in nature.



We were looking for an innovative balance of traditional and alternative approaches to learning: an approach that maintained a strong focus on maths and language.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNITY CLASS

How can you be involved?

From the beginning (2003), the Community Class has been a collaboration of ideas and a celebration of children's love of learning.

*"As parents we believed young children have a natural desire to learn. To nurture this love of learning we set about creating a holistic learning environment where our children follow their gifts, interests and strengths."*  
- Ellen Madigan (parent)

Parents are actively involved in the life and learning of their children and the class:

- Leading a weekly activity.
- Listening to students read and work in small groups.
- Organise visiting speakers and guests.
- Just being in the class and helping document and value student learning.

Parents are encouraged to be involved with their child's learning/curriculum so as to reflect the values of the group.

We are looking forward to 2006 and are currently planning an innovative eco extension to our classroom. This will enable our growing numbers to move from 23-30 students Prep-5. This will enable us to have two learning spaces with a multi purpose arts space between.