

Where great journeys begin



**PRESHIL**

THE MARGARET LYTTLE MEMORIAL SCHOOL

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**NURSERY TO YEAR 12**





## OUR PHILOSOPHY:

Preshil is not a place where children do what they like, but rather a place where children like what they do."

*Margaret E Lyttle, Principal 1944-1994*

The world needs creative thinkers – people willing to challenge convention, do things differently. Particularly now, as we face a rapidly changing global landscape, it's imperative our children grow up with a curiosity about the world and have an appetite for learning and self-development.

The themes of compassion and social justice have characterised Preshil since its inception. Our teaching philosophy follows on from the original principles established by the school's founder, Margaret J R Lyttle, in the 1930s. It is an approach to education that recognises each child as an individual, with their own unique talents and traits that we value and nurture. At Preshil, children play an active role in their education. They are expected to take responsibility for their actions and ultimately create their own future.

Choice with responsibility is a powerful combination – one that fosters self-discipline, maturity, resilience, confidence, initiative and courage in every child.

By providing a school experience that celebrates the individual, our children learn about themselves and uncover their own potential with our full support. As each child tries new things and their interests evolve, Preshil helps them establish their personal goals and pursue them with passion.





# A CUSTOM-MADE EDUCATION

**Every child is unique.** By the time they start school they already have their own personality, nuances and capabilities.

Children develop at different speeds. That's why our teachers listen to children and work with them to build upon a challenging curriculum designed around their interests and strengths and the developmental readiness of the child. The aim is to ensure each child is fully engaged in learning and performs to their potential.

## **A NON-COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT:**

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Preshil does not award marks or prizes. Testing is only used for diagnostic purposes and assessment given prior to VCE is richly descriptive. Preshil eschews activities that place students in competition with each other. Fundamentally, success at Preshil is about a child achieving their own potential – not about how they perform against others. Our children are free to develop without judgement, reprisals or the threat of failure.

## **TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION:**

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For a lasting education, communication should flow both ways between teacher and student. Traditionally, a teacher stands in front of a class and talks at students, not with them. Learning at Preshil is different. Group discussions with teachers as facilitators rather than directors and extensive one-on-one interaction energises the minds of our young students.



# JUNIOR SCHOOL: *Arlington*

A child's learning environment has a significant impact on how they absorb information. From their very first years until they graduate, Preshil children learn in stimulating surroundings that enhance their education and development.

The junior school, named Arlington, was designed by a collaboration of Preshil children and award-winning architect Kevin Borland.

Cottage-style classrooms sit in a landscape that inspires the children's sense of wonder and imagination. Learning spaces include elevated platforms under a canopy of trees, garden retreats and inspiring classrooms.

## **THE NURSERY:**

Nestled in the heart of our junior campus is the 3s and 4s. Even at this young age, children are seen as competent, capable, rich in potential and able to construct their own views. By encouraging them to create and explore from their first years, their imagination grows. So begins their journey of discovery. Here we build upon children's passions, creativity and wonder.













## 5s TO 11s (PREP TO GRADE 6):

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From the moment they start junior school, our children are guided through activities that nourish their personal development as well as their literacy and numeracy. With curiosity and determination they build cubby houses, engage in play making, create projects and explore their world with others.

From the earliest years opportunities are provided to express their point of view, through daily meetings in the classroom and weekly junior school forums.

As well as the core subjects which include Art and Drama, all children at Arlington learn French. They also enjoy musical experiences through listening, singing, movement and dance. We have a thriving instrumental program and run extra curricular orchestral and vocal groups, with many children also having private tuition.

## PROJECT-ORIENTED:

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Project-oriented activity is a primary vehicle for study in the junior years, through which multiple curriculum subjects are explored and researched. We believe learning by doing leads to a deeper understanding of what is being studied.

The topic 'Space and Place', for example, provides simultaneous opportunities to explore cultural and historical elements around housing, mathematical constructs around building, environment and stories about home.

It is through collaboration and interactions with others that the children develop and explore their theories of the world. Children engage in both practical and technical learning with academic rigour. They develop essential skills in problem solving, cooperation and learning from each other and are able to think things through rather than waiting to be spoon-fed the answers.

## A FLEXIBLE EDUCATION:

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Throughout junior school, children are placed in multi-age groupings. We adopt this 'age group' approach and remain flexible at this early stage to accommodate varying learning speeds. In this way we don't impose grading divisions that serve only to develop preconceptions about what level children should be at and what arbitrary performance targets they must reach.

## READY FOR THEIR SENIOR SCHOOL YEARS:

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By the time our students finish junior school, they're developing their own voice. Their intellectual and physical abilities are highly developed and they can enter the next stage of their schooling with confidence.

Armed with confidence and initiative, Preshil students are equipped to make thoughtful and judicious choices regarding their own education and development. The spirit of creativity and discovery founded in the junior years continues to shape the curriculum into Year 7 and beyond.



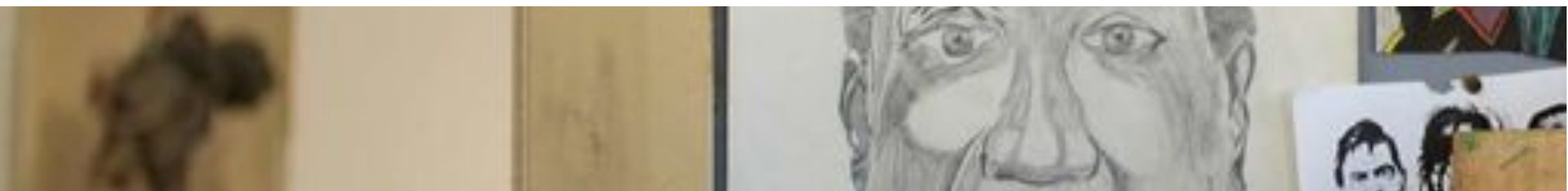


# SENIOR SCHOOL: Blackhall + Kalimna

Students should step out into the world toward a future of their own design. They should be confident to speak up in an adult environment, able to challenge, question and look beneath the surface.

By treating our students as individuals, they discover their own unique skills and learn to stand behind their opinions. Our specialised approach to education helps students realise their potential and leave school with energy and confidence, ready to handle tertiary studies and the workforce.

This occurs as a result of the nurturing philosophy of the junior years which continues into the senior levels. Regular interaction remains a significant factor in the development of our secondary students, and class sizes are kept small with a maximum of 18 students.







## A GRAND PLACE TO STUDY:

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The senior school resides on a separate campus. Classes take place in Blackhall and Kalimna – two large Victorian mansions that stand side by side behind the front garden, divided by an avenue of trees. The senior school has modern science laboratories, music and media facilities, a technology building and an intimate theatre space. The Frances Derham Arts Centre at the rear of the property consists of several buildings neighbouring a luminous painting studio designed by architect Gregory Burgess.

Rapport building amongst students and teachers happens early at every year level. At the beginning of each year, students go on a school camp with either the year above or the year below; Year 7 with 8, 9 with 10 and the combined VCE years.

The Lorne Surf Lifesaving Camp has been very popular, and our VCE retreats give students a time to reflect on study skills and contemplate the year ahead.

The core curriculum in Years 7 to 10 of Mathematics, Science, English, History and Physical Education is complemented by French, German, Imaginative Writing, Kitchen Garden, Media, Drama, Art and Music as well as a range of other electives. By the time they start their VCE, students will have developed a mature approach to learning and self-improvement. Refreshingly, they look forward to their final years with confidence and enthusiasm.











## ELECTIVES FOR YEARS 7 TO 10:

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(These options may vary from term to term depending on student requests)

- Extreme Ornithology
- LogicPro/Gamemaking
- Sustainable Living 'Reduce 10%'
- Philosophy
- Sport/running/walking
- Theatre
- Woodwork
- French Cooking
- Ceramics
- Mi Amigo Internacional (Australian/Columbian Cultural Exchange Project)
- Yoga
- Student Newspaper
- Fundraising



## YEARS 7 AND 8:

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Senior school marks a significant departure from childhood and the first step toward adolescence. Naturally this transition creates a mix of anxiety and excitement as students come to terms with their identity.

One-on-one interaction with the individual helps students become comfortable with who they are. It creates a safe environment for students to explore and discover; to try, and try again.

Group activities encourage students to connect and collaborate. This helps them become adept at teamwork as they learn to solve problems and face challenges together. It's in these early years they start to plan and organise, and begin to work to higher standards.

At this time, a separate 'Integrated Studies' unit encompassing English, Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) and Philosophy challenges students to make connections in their learning to achieve a deeper understanding of their subject matter. This integration of learning across subjects is extended to other subjects as well. Ancient Greece could be explored in Integrated Studies, for example, and brought to life in Drama, Maths and Art.

Creative activities are commonplace. Art and Drama are compulsory subjects and there are regular exhibitions and performances. Students are encouraged to learn an instrument or join a singing group. The more a student becomes comfortable with self-expression, the more they are free to be themselves.

## YEARS 9 AND 10:

The middle-school years are exciting times as our students start to identify their abilities and pursue their interests. They're well advanced on their journey of discovery and highly motivated to achieve their goals.

Teachers continue their focus on integrating subject matter for students. They work closely together to promote this holistic approach of learning.

In these years, students can extend their studies and develop an appreciation of other world views through collaborative projects with outside agencies. Experiences may include the Arts Cultural Exchange project with Columbian students, the French Cultural Experience in New Caledonia, the Northern India Cultural Tour and the Indigenous, Environmental and Philosophy camp.

Year 10 students also have an opportunity to take up positions of service in the wider community. In these cases, the value of social service and community connectedness is developed. Students are also responsible for running the school canteen – ordering stock, serving customers, cooking and allocating profits – with a portion often donated to charities. This teaches them to manage basic business practices and solve problems as a group. It also includes the completion of a Food Handling Certificate.



## VCE: YEARS 11 AND 12:

There's no escaping the pressures of VCE. But because Preshil students have learned how to think and not just memorise in their earlier years, they can approach these challenges with assuredness and maturity.

Preshil offers all the traditional subjects for VCE as well as VET subjects. What makes us different is the way these subjects are taught. In keeping with Preshil's teaching philosophies, knowledge is acquired by various means allowing students to interrogate issues in a thought-provoking way.

By creating an environment similar to university, students gain experience working in smaller tutorial-style groups, allowing teachers to establish a closer relationship with their students, and to closely monitor progress.

It's critically important at this demanding time that students have someone they can depend on for help and advice. To meet this need, Preshil has pioneered a very successful practice called the Tracker System whereby each student is assigned a teacher, known as their tracker. This person develops a strong relationship with that student, providing support throughout the VCE years, to help address any issues.







# HEALTH & WELLBEING


Mental and physical health are paramount for a successful education. Preshil's carefully constructed pastoral care program provides a safety net for all students. Across the junior secondary years, the Years 7 and 8 Coordinator leads a teaching team that gets to know the individual needs of all Year 7 and 8 students.

In the middle years Forums are introduced. All students are assigned to smaller Forum groups and their Forum teacher is their first point of call. In VCE, the Trackers form the pastoral care team that guides students during their final years of schooling.

At all levels, the School Counsellor supports both students and teachers, providing a caring and professional service for all those requiring extra guidance at given times in their secondary years.

Health and Wellbeing are topics worked directly into the curriculum. Resilience is taught as a subject in Years 7 & 8 and Health is a compulsory part of the Year 9 and 10 curriculum.

All students in Years 7 to 10 take Physical Education as part of their weekly curriculum to enhance understanding of health and the value of exercise. A commitment is made to teach students how to make fitness a life-long practice.













## RESILIENCE:

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The promotion of self-management, responsible decision-making and positive relationships is an integral part of every class at Preshil. Students in Years 7 and 8 participate in a class called 'Resiliency' which is designed to enhance their ability to cope with the complexity of everyday life. They explore ways to develop their strengths and assertiveness through games, role-play and discussions.



## FORUMS:

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Our Forums are a place where thoughts and opinions about Preshil and the world are shared and discussed. Forums underpin the values and philosophies of Preshil. In paired year levels of 7 and 8, 9 and 10 and VCE, students come together to discuss issues that can range from "Should we be selling Fair Trade chocolate in the canteen?" to "How do we want our new VCE area to look and feel?" Committees are formed; action is taken; and consultative decision-making follows.



## PEER SUPPORT:

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Each year a group of Year 10 students volunteers to become Group Mentors for those in Year 7. The senior students run one class a week and in doing so, pick up valuable leadership skills. The classes focus on fun, friendship and personal development in a small, safe environment. The bonding carries into the playground where the Year 7 students know they have an older student to support them as they adjust to the demands of being in a secondary school environment.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION:

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Preshil has produced many professional sports men and women however the school has never promoted fierce competition. Games are played with an emphasis on participation and enjoyment rather than competition and winning. The final score is important but soon forgotten.

Physical and outdoor education is based on a developmental approach so different activities are emphasised at different ages. There are formal games and activities as well as informal play where materials and equipment are available for use by the children. The emphasis is always to promote physical health, balanced wellbeing and a life-long enjoyment of physical and outdoor activity.

## PASTORAL AND COUNSELLING SERVICES:

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Preshil offers a free consultation for parents regarding emotional or social difficulties experienced by students. Parents are welcome to discuss parenting issues and their child's development at any time, and to use the service as a reflective space and sounding board.

For the majority of primary-aged children, parental consultation with teachers is generally the outcome. Support and advice to both parents and staff is also offered at secondary levels. Direct counselling with individuals and occasional mediation sessions between students in upper primary levels also takes place when required. In secondary levels the consultation continues for parents and staff, with more time allocated for individual counselling as the students mature into their secondary years and their needs evolve.









# READY

At Preshil, we constantly explore new ways of educating children in the 21st century. The objective of Preshil is to equip students for a changing society, ensuring they are well adjusted, capable of making their own decisions, and able to cooperate with others.

Preshil graduates are mature young adults, confident and adept. They enjoy a love of learning, have a social conscience, and have a firm belief in themselves. They have courage, compassion and an appreciation for beauty and life. They are resolute, forthright and able to operate successfully as individuals and as a part of a social group. Preshil students are well-equipped to tackle future tertiary studies, enter the workforce or follow their passions in whatever way they choose.

**The unhindered development of our children, academically, socially and emotionally, is the Preshil mission. It's also our greatest achievement. Your child's potential is theirs to discover. Preshil will help them find it.**

# GREAT JOURNEYS THAT BEGAN AT PRESHIL

Senior Legal  
Advisor to  
the UN

Preshil

**Dr Gideon Boas**  
Senior Lecturer Monash Law





Olympic Gold  
Medal

Preshil

**Lauren Burns**  
Taekwondo Olympian

Young  
Business Woman  
of the Year

Preshil

**Zahava Elenberg**  
Architect

*Margaret E Lyttle, Principal 1944-1994*

"Children are magic"

**PRESHIL**

The Margaret Lyttle Memorial School

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