

# LEARNING *at* LISIEUX

EXPLORING

QUESTIONING

DISCOVERING

INVESTIGATING

PROBLEM  
SOLVING

CONNECTING  
WITH NATURE



**Lisieux**  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
TORQUAY

At Lisieux, our school motto

# 'KNOWN AND LOVED'

epitomises our educational approach. We understand that in order to thrive academically, students need to feel safe, happy and to have a sense of connection to their environment and their community. Essentially, we believe that

'WHEN WE TAKE CARE OF WELLBEING,  
WE TAKE CARE OF LEARNING.'

Educators at Lisieux share a belief about the **importance of nature** in a child's development. We know that children thrive in nurturing environments that encourage them to explore and engage meaningfully with the world around them.

Lisieux provides a rich and innovative curriculum; we celebrate our faith and value relationships; and, we prioritise opportunities to learn outdoors.





# WHY IS OUTDOOR LEARNING SO IMPORTANT?

Children who engage regularly in natural settings:

- demonstrate greater creativity;
- are more likely to think outside the box;
- show improved oral language skills;
- demonstrate social skills such as collaboration, turn-taking, negotiation with peers;
- develop a love, appreciation and respect for nature;
- are more physically active and sick less often;
- have lower rates of anger anxiety and boredom;
- learn to recognise and negotiate risk;
- have greater positive feelings;
- have more positive social relationships.



As a faith-based learning community, we strive to foster a culture which explicitly develops the full capacities of each child: cognitive, social, physical, emotional and spiritual. Our teaching and learning occurs within the context of Gospel values, specifically justice and compassion. In this way our students are challenged to use their gifts well, respecting and caring for the needs of self and others, and walking forward strong in faith to be young people of knowledge, integrity and truth.

*Here we support students to grow in virtue and to embrace a view of themselves and the world that leads to peace, justice, and the prospering of the whole of creation. It is a journey that is enlightened by faith, animated by love and leading to hope. (Horizons of Hope)*







At Lisieux, our curriculum gives students freedom and permission to explore, question, evaluate and create. Our programs have been specifically designed to align with the requirements of the Victorian Curriculum, while incorporating an innovative approach to teaching an integrated curriculum, which quite literally is ‘a breath of fresh air’ that we believe will have significant benefits for student outcomes.

Alongside the explicit teaching of core skills in Literacy and Numeracy, we integrate authentic endeavours wherever possible. Our curriculum reflects an Inquiry Mindset, and includes specialist programs, designed to engage students authentically in learning opportunities. Our program is known as **Seeds for Growth**, and is structured as a progressive continuum from Prep–Year 6.



## SEEDS FOR GROWTH



The “Seeds for Growth” program has been uniquely developed for Lisieux students, and reflects best practice pedagogy, a focus on social interaction and authentic learning opportunities. It is sequenced from Prep–Year 6.

# SEEDS

Students' natural sense of awe and wonder is nurtured in an environment designed to stimulate curiosity, spark creativity and help them make sense of their world. Relationship skills are fostered through opportunities to communicate, question and explore. This critical first stage of primary education is a time for discovery and dreaming.



DISCOVERY



MIND  
& BODY



THE BOOK  
GARDEN



100  
LANGUAGES




OUTDOOR  
DISCOVERY

# SPROUTS


The connection with natural spaces continues, inviting open ended interaction, risk taking, exploration and connection with nature. Student diversity is recognised and celebrated. Learning opportunities are provided through guided provocations and investigations. These experiences are focused on strengthening social engagement through collaboration with others. A sense of gratitude for the gifts of our world is nurtured.



OUTDOOR  
DISCOVERY



MIND  
& BODY



THE BOOK  
GARDEN



100  
LANGUAGES



FRIDAY FLOW



# SAPPLINGS

Independent, critical and creative thinking is encouraged as children begin to deepen their own understandings through means such as questioning, experimenting and evaluating ideas. Students begin to consider possibilities beyond their immediate environment, taking on extra responsibility and being provided with opportunities to stretch their imagination.



BEACH  
DISCOVERY



FRIDAY FLOW



MIND  
& BODY



100  
LANGUAGES



THE GROWTH  
PROJECT



DE'COUVERTE



FULL STEAM  
AHEAD

# TREES

Students are encouraged to be problem finders and problem solvers. Their setting challenges them to think as global citizens, beyond their own context to the needs of others, and act as agents of advocacy. The values of empathy and compassion are nurtured.



BEACH  
DISCOVERY



THE GROWTH  
PROJECT



100  
LANGUAGES



YOUNG  
DESIGNERS



MIND  
& BODY



FULL STEAM  
AHEAD



FRIDAY FLOW

# OUTDOOR DISCOVERY

*“Come forth into the light of things, let nature be your teacher.”  
(William Wordsworth)*

At Lisieux, we focus on outdoor learning as a means for students to construct learning, collaborate socially and explore. Our **Outdoor Discovery Program** runs weekly for students in Prep – Year 2 and encourages an appreciation of and connection with the local environment.

**Outdoor Discovery** is designed using an inquiry-based approach, with links to other areas of the curriculum including Religious Education, 100 Languages and Literacy. It creates opportunities to explore, to interact with others, to engage in risk-taking experiences and connect with nature. It has been designed to encourage students' connection to their environment.

Our students enjoy learning in our own bush-block setting during **Outdoor Discovery**. The setting features a range of trees, The Chook Palace, an outdoor classroom seated area and a repurposed shearing shed, known as The Discovery Centre. Outdoor Discovery commences with an outdoor mindfulness time after which curiosity is nurtured through a range of natural provocations. Students play freely, building stick cubbies and shelters, trading found objects, exploring nature with magnifying glasses, collecting and identifying flora and fauna, and sketching or recording their discoveries. Our motto is ‘there is no such thing as bad weather, just inappropriate clothing’ and students are encouraged to wear hats, coats, boots, etc as required so they can experience all elements of the outdoors.

Beyond our own natural setting, we make regular excursions to other local settings such as the Torquay beach and foreshore, Deep Creek, and the You Yangs to spend time in nature and strengthen our connection to the wider natural world.







## DISCOVERY

*“Providing the tools for children to create, observe, wonder, discover, experiment and explore sets the scene for them to acquire a deep understanding of their world and to flourish.”*  
(Educator, Lisieux)



Our **Discovery** program promotes an opportunity to develop creativity in a play-rich environment. Students select from a range of hands-on resources, including nature-based components, to experiment, role play and interact with others. A key focus of this time is the development of oral language and social skills.

## BEACH DISCOVERY PROGRAM

Being situated in a coastal town, we strive to maximise connection with the local environment. Students participate in our Lisieux **Beach Discovery Program**, where they learn about their local coastal and marine environment as well as environmental stewardship and beach safety.





## THE GROWTH PROJECT

*“The best education does not happen at a desk, but rather engaged in everyday living – hands on, exploring, in active relationship with life.”  
(Vince Gowman)*



The ***Growth Project*** is a specialist subject for students in Years 3 – 6 and was inspired by the concept of personal, social and environmental growth. One of its goals is to improve the community’s overall attitude to caring for the environment. We recognise that taking learning outside the classroom enables students to make connections with their local environment, which makes their learning more meaningful. Students learn, in a hands-on way, about sustainability, recycling and permaculture through a range of ventures such as composting, worm farming and cooking as well as recycled art projects. Year levels are responsible for particular sustainability projects which are incorporated into their learning, with curriculum links to Science, Mathematics and Religious Education.



## FULL STEAM AHEAD

***Full Steam Ahead*** is a specialist subject for students in Years 3–6. It has been designed to draw upon the synergy of the arts and sciences with a hands-on style of inquiry based learning.







## FRIDAY FLOW

“Flow” is an optimal psychological state that we experience when engaged in an activity that is appropriately challenging to one’s skill level, and results in concentrated focus on a task, deep learning and high levels of personal and work satisfaction.

Students from Years 1–6 elect one of a range of creative offerings and work with a mentor (educator or volunteer) in mixed-age groups for a period of four weeks on Friday afternoons. On the fifth week of the cycle we have an expo celebrating our learning. Some of the elective offerings currently available include choir, sculpture, knitting, construction, etc.





# DE'COUVERTE

Inspired by the French phrase which means “go and explore the world”, De’Couverte is a specialist program for Year 3/4 students at Lisieux, designed to foster creativity and critical thinking skills. Using a design model, students work collaboratively to respond to open-ended real-life social questions. Applying the framework that ‘there is more than one right answer’, students are encouraged to consider relevant and meaningful ways to respond to the challenge, and devise their own innovative solutions, integrating many aspects of the curriculum. An expo showcasing the thought processes and outcomes is celebrated throughout the term. Acknowledging that when students feel that their voice is heard, and they are able to make valuable contributions, their sense of themselves as contributing members of society grows.

**An example of a De’Couverte provocation might be:**

- *Create a cardboard arcade game.*
- *Invent a new sport which must include the following items:*

*Create a model structure to help the billy goats get from one side of the creek to the other, using the materials provided. The model billy goats will be provided and will have specific weights, which your bridge must be able to withstand.*



# YOUNG DESIGNERS

Young Designers is a specialist subject for Year 5 / 6 Lisieux students. It extends upon the De'Couverte program, utilising a Design thinking methodology to pose and offer solutions to problems. Students use a range of strategies to design problems and opportunities, visualising and creating innovative solutions, and evaluating those ideas using an assessment criteria. The design cycle involves a process of building empathy, creating a needs statement, brainstorming and ideation, generating prototypes and testing ideas.

**The Design Model encourages students to:**

- be more aware of the world around them
- believe they can play a role in shaping that world
- take action towards a more desirable future.

Design thinking is a methodology used to solve complex problems and find useful solutions. In relation to education, this is a creative process where students generate new ideas for further development and evaluate these based on criteria to help them design meaningful solutions to problems posed. This type of thinking is often used to help promote creative thinking, teamwork and have students take responsibility for their own learning.

**Young Designers applies the following key steps:**

*What do you want to change?*

*How can you make a change?*

*Make the change.*

*Reflect on the change.*

*Share your experience.*







**An example of a Young Designers provocation might be:**

*“If Ubuntu means ‘I am because we are’, how do we strengthen the connections across the Torquay community and create a greater sense of connection?”*

*or*

*From a range of selected sites around Geelong and The Surf Coast, each group of students is allocated one site for renewal. Students decide how they will influence and improve the liveability of the site.*

*Showcase evenings are held, an opportunity for community members to witness the student design model and outcomes, and for students to share their learning with a live audience.*





“EDUCATION IS NOT THE FILLING OF A PAIL, BUT THE LIGHTING OF A FIRE.”  
(W.B. Yeats)

*The Lisieux curriculum caters for and celebrates diversity. We recognise that students have different gifts and strengths, and that they will develop at different rates in different ways. The strengths-based approach is derived from our Positive Education philosophy which maintains that every child can be successful. To cater for student strengths and their unique interests and passions, we have developed three small-group intervention classes, etc of which is facilitated by specialist educators.*

*Our **Atelier program** is based on the Reggio Emilia principle that every child has at least ‘one hundred languages’ for expressing perspectives of the world. In small targeted groups, our Atelierista leads groups over several sessions in creative experiences such as music-making, design and expression, while integrating nature, science, literacy or history as well.*





Our **Sports Academy** program targets small groups for sessions in physical and social development, gross and fine motor skills, teamwork and collaboration.



**Shinrin-yoku** is a term derived from the Japanese culture and translates to 'forest bathing' which involves reconnection with nature. At Lisieux, we recognise that time spent immersed in nature boosts wellbeing and connection. Our small-group shinrin-yoku initiative is based in the school's natural environment, and incorporates mindfulness practices, sensory engagement and engagement in outdoor projects. It fosters stewardship of creation and creates opportunities for interaction with the broader community.



Each of our specialist groups is centred on enhancing strengths, igniting passions and initiatives, and building opportunities for student mastery and efficacy.





A thread running through all our Lisieux programs is a commitment to Positive Psychology practices. Positive Education describes the approach of bringing together the science of Positive Psychology with best-practice teaching to allow individuals and communities to flourish. Positive Education provides an umbrella for a range of strategies and initiatives that aim to build strengths, capabilities, wellbeing and resilience.

At Lisieux, our Positive Education program can be seen in the following ways:



Connections Week



Brain breaks



Classroom routines  
and check-in practices



Growth Mindset



SEEDS SPROUTS SAPLINGS TREES





Restorative Practice



Character strengths



Mindfulness (daily)



Branching Out Week



Gratitude circles (daily)



Character education



Focus on core competencies such as recognition of emotions; grit; setting and achieving positive goals; responsible decision making.



Focus of the Fortnight



Leadership training



Outdoor Discovery – sit spots



Service learning



Systems thinking in De’Couverte and Young Designers







Friday Flow (Year 1-6)



Social circles (lunchtime)



Circle time (class dialogue)



Christian meditation

The implementation of Positive Education at Lisieux requires a strategic approach which involves a commitment to ongoing staff professional development; cross-disciplinary collaboration; a cycle of planning, reflection and review; a school-wide explicit focus on relationships (and the time to develop these) and the building of a positive culture.





**FAITH** **HOPE**  
**FAMILY** **CITIZENSHIP** **KNOWN AND LOVED** **CONNECTION TO ENVIRONMENT** **WELLBEING** **EXPLORATION**  
**FRIENDSHIPS** **KINDNESS** **COMMUNICATION**  
**CREATIVITY** **COMMUNITY**  
**GRATITUDE** **CRITICAL THINKING**  
**MINDFULNESS** **STEWARDSHIP**  
**CURIOSITY**



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