



Plenty Valley

CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

In Christ: Wisdom & Knowledge

PRIMARY PROSPECTUS



INTRODUCTION FROM THE HEAD OF PRIMARY

At Plenty Valley we provide a safe and happy environment. Plenty Valley is a place where we live and learn in the spirit of cooperation, harmony, creativity and endeavour. We want our College to be a place where everyone feels comfortable, secure and successful. We believe that children's spiritual, educational, social, emotional and physical development will thrive in a positive and caring environment. For our students only best practice teaching is suitable and this is why we have embraced the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (PYP). Not only do our students benefit from this international curriculum framework and inquiry based curriculum, our teaching staff also benefit from being trained to world class standards by world class trainers. Our staff is our greatest asset and are highly valued here at Plenty Valley by leaders and parents alike.

This curriculum booklet outlines for you an overview of the Primary Curriculum with details of the Primary Years Program (PYP) and other key learning areas.

At the outset we publicly state our commitments to quality learning in a Christian environment. We also support and promote the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including commitment to:

- elected government
- the rule of law
- equal rights for all before the law
- freedom of religion
- freedom of speech and association
- the values of openness and understanding others

I look forward to meeting with you and taking you on a tour of the Primary School, where I can show you why Plenty Valley Christian College is considered to be the College of choice in the region.

Lily McDonald
Head of Primary



VISION

The vision of Plenty Valley Christian College is to be a learning community within the creative and responsive mind and spirit of Christ.

MISSION OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Plenty Valley Christian College commits to nurturing:

- Christian education and values
- Quality pastoral care for children
- Learning and academic excellence achieved through guided inquiry and critical thinking
- Desired lifelong learning
- Activities that develop a student's whole personality
- The discovery and development of unique gifts in service to others

THE PRIMARY SCHOOL SUPPORTS AND PROMOTES

- Transparent Christian values
- A conscious learning community
- Partnering with families
- A heart for service
- Relationships founded in love, grace and forgiveness
- Global awareness





A PROFILE FOR LIVING IN THE 21st CENTURY

To achieve an International education we work together as teachers to embrace and develop in each other the qualities of the student profile. As a community of learners, we welcome the future challenges of the 21st Century by developing in each of our students the capacity and ability to be:

Inquirers	Their natural curiosity has been nurtured. They have acquired the skills necessary to conduct purposeful, constructive research. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.
Thinkers	They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to make sound decisions and to solve complex problems.
Communicators	They receive and express ideas and information confidently in more than one language, including the language of mathematical symbols.
Risk-takers	They approach unfamiliar situations without anxiety and have the confidence and independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are courageous and articulate in defending those things in which they believe.
Knowledgeable	They have spent time in our schools exploring themes which have global relevance and importance. In so doing, they have acquired a critical mass of significant knowledge.
Principled	They have sound grasp of the principles of moral reasoning. They have integrity, honesty and a sense of fairness and justice.
Caring	They show sensitivity towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a sense of personal commitment to action and service.
Open-minded	They respect the views, values and traditions of other individuals and cultures and are accustomed to seeking and considering a range of points of views.
Balanced	They understand the importance of physical and mental balance and personal well-being.
Reflective	They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and analyse their personal strengths and weaknesses in a constructive manner.

Making the PYP Happen, IBO 2000

Students develop the attributes and dispositions of this profile through engagement in structured inquiry, which brings together five essential elements of curriculum: concepts, knowledge, skills, attitudes and actions. The inquiry provides the aims for the curriculum and focuses our attention on the fact that student learning is what schools are about. We want our students to leave school with a passion to question and with the knowledge to know where and how information can be found.

THE FIVE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE CURRICULUM

In looking to achieve balance, the PYP emphasises five key components of the written curriculum. These are referred to as the essential elements of curriculum and they are defined as follows:

1. CONCEPTS

What do we want the student to understand?

There are eight key concepts:

Form- What is it like?

Connection-How is it connected to other things?

Function-How does it work?

Perspective-What are the points of view?

Change-How is it changing?

Responsibility-What is our responsibility?

Causation-Why is it like it is?

Reflection-How will we know?

Causation-Why is it like it is?

Reflection-How will we know?

2. KNOWLEDGE

The PYP recognises that it would be inappropriate to define any narrow, fixed body of knowledge as the essential content which every student should know. Instead the PYP identifies six themes or areas of knowledge under which units of inquiry are slotted. This ensures a balanced approach to teaching and learning in any one year and across year levels.

The six organising themes are:

- **Who we are?**
- **Where we are in place and time?**
- **How we express ourselves?**
- **How the world works?**
- **How we organise ourselves?**
- **Sharing the planet**

Content is chosen on the basis that it will be significant, challenging, relevant and engaging. These are audited regularly to ensure growth and value. They also are often aligned with the Australian National Curriculum wherever possible.

THE FIVE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE CURRICULUM

3. SKILLS

The construction of meaning, and therefore understanding, is complemented by the students acquiring and applying a broad range of skills.

These include :

Social Skills, Research Skills, Thinking Skills, Communication Skills and Self-management Skills.

4. ATTITUDES

It is important to acknowledge that concepts, skills and knowledge alone do not make an internationally educated person. It is vital that we articulate and model positive attitudes towards people, the environment and learning.

Twelve attitudes are defined by the PYP :

Appreciation	Curiosity
Commitment	Empathy
Confidence	Enthusiasm
Cooperation	Independence
Creativity	Integrity
Respect	Tolerance

Attitudes are taught within the Unit of Inquiry chosen.

5. ACTION

In today's world, it is important that our students see and value the importance of thoughtful and appropriate action. We need to provide students with opportunities to reflect choose and act on issues of importance and relevance to them.

Through planning, teaching and assessment, these five essential elements come together meaningfully





APPROACHES TO LEARNING

Students in the primary years learn through a constructivist approach. This is an active process in which learners construct new ideas or concepts based upon their current and prior knowledge. Students become engaged by applying their existing knowledge and real world experience, learning to hypothesise, test their theories and ultimately draw conclusions from their findings.

The table below demonstrates constructivist approach in the right hand side of the column.

Less emphasis on	More emphasis on
Basic skills	Big concepts
Strict adherence to fixed curriculum	Pursuit of student questions and interests
Materials and primarily textbooks and work-books	Materials including primary sources and manipulative materials
Learning based on repetition	Learning is interactive, building on what the student already knows
Teachers feeding information to students and student's receiving knowledge	Teachers having a dialogue with students, helping students construct knowledge
Teachers role being directive	Teachers role being interactive
Assessment through testing , correct answers	Assessment including student work, observations, points of view together with tests.
Knowledge being as passive	Knowledge being as dynamic, ever changing with our experiences
Students working primarily alone	Students working primarily in groups.

In collaboration with teachers students develop questions that relate to areas of interest within a Unit of Inquiry. Students, guided by teachers develop strategies to find answers to their questions.

A supportive class environment becomes the centre for this structured inquiry, where positive attitudes are fostered and opportunities for student initiated action are encouraged.

Teachers understand that students have different ways of knowing, or styles of learning. Students may learn through a variety of ways such as through music, by doing and manipulatives, in groups, by themselves, through art or Mathematics.

From Foundation to year Six, core skills and knowledge are developed within Mathematics and English in addition to teaching these subjects through the Units of Inquiry.

ASSESSMENT

Plenty Valley Christian College's commitment to the Primary Years Programme is an indication of its ongoing dedication towards inquiry, toward deep and extended learning processes, and toward more effective assessment practices and feedback on the learning process. The PYP approach to assessment recognises the importance of assessing the process of inquiry as well as the product(s) of inquiry, and aims to integrate and support both (Making the PYP Happen 2009).

Assessment is used to inform planning and practice, guide instruction and lead to improved student learning. Assessment is always done keeping in mind the dignity of the individual person.

Assessment in the classroom will include:

- Developing clear rubrics and criteria/task sheets.
- Using representative examples of students' work or performance to provide information about student learning.
- Collecting evidence of student's understanding and thinking.
- Documenting the learning process of groups and individuals.

- Engaging students in reflecting on their learning.
- Self and peer assessment.
- Identifying exemplar student work.
- Keeping records of tasks/results.
- Keeping records of tasks/results.
- Processes that make student learning visible.

Assessment of prior knowledge (Assessment FOR learning)

- Teachers assess prior knowledge before beginning a new inquiry.
- Students will be given an opportunity to share their prior knowledge.

Formative Assessment - SUPPORTS learning (Assessment FOR learning).

Formative assessment is interwoven with daily instruction and assists the teacher in planning for the next stage of learning. It provides regular and frequent feedback to the teacher and the student. It also gives students an opportunity to improve their understanding and to cultivate enthusiasm for learning.

Key factors that improve learning through assessment are:

- Clarifying and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success.
- Engineering effective classroom discussions and learning tasks.
- Providing feedback that moves learners forward.
- Activating students as owners of their learning.
- Activating students as instructional resources for one another.

Summative (Assessment Of learning)

This occurs when teachers use evidence of student learning to make judgements on student achievement against goals and standards.



REPORTING

Reporting Assessment Data Information Evening

This is an opportunity for parents to meet their teacher and to understand goals, homework expectations and how we assist their child together. It will give teachers the opportunity to talk about the Primary years programme and the development of attitudes to learning.

Teacher and parent interviews

These facilitate the partnership between home and school. They allow students and teachers to demonstrate achievement of learning goals and attitudes. The students are actively involved in the discussions. Teachers and students use the Portfolio to indicate or illustrate points made during the discussion. This conference model will be held late in second term and will be a lead up to Student led conferences in third term.

Student-Led conferences

Students are involved in their learning and reporting of learning to parents.

Students are given the opportunity to share the work they have compiled in their Learning Portfolios over the year.

Students guide their parents around the room to prepared learning stations and also classroom displays. The opportunity is given for parents to learn about Physical Education, performing and visual Arts and French. Students should demonstrate concepts learned and share products developed in these areas.

The Primary Years Programme Exhibition

As a culminating experience the exhibition is an opportunity for students to exhibit the attributes of the IBO learner profile that has been developing throughout their engagement with the PYP.

Students engage in a collaborative inquiry process that involves them in identifying, investigating and offering solutions to real life issues or problems.

The school community are active participants in the exhibition through mentoring, speaking and attending the Exhibition.

Portfolios

The portfolio is designed to allow the student to be part of the authentic assessment process. Portfolios are a collection of each student's work; showing the range and quality of their work over a period of time.

Reports

Australian Government regulations require that schools provide twice yearly reports to parents and carers. These plainly written reports must comply with a number of criteria which include:-

- (a) Are readily understandable to those responsible for the student and give an accurate and objective assessment of the student's progress and achievement;
- (b) Include an assessment of the student's achievement against any available national standards; and
- (c) Include, for subjects studied, an assessment of the student's achievement-
 - (i) reported as A, B, C, D and E (or an equivalent five-point scale), clearly defined against specific learning standards; and
 - (ii) relative to the performance of the student's peer group.

By adopting the PYP at Plenty Valley we have:

- A comprehensive curriculum structure
- A coordinated approach to curriculum
- A spiral curriculum
- A consistent teaching pedagogy from Foundation to year Six
- A structure/framework on which to build and develop the curriculum
- An inquiry based curriculum
- A local, national and international focus
- A clear understanding of what we are endeavouring to achieve with our students and how to go about it
- A structured, directed and supportive approach to professional Development
- A staff that is trained to world class standards and by world class trainers
- A staff, and parent body, who are working together
- Known and consistent assessment strategies
- A curriculum and documentation that is judged against world standards
- A clear direction and vision for the future



KEY LEARNING AREAS IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Areas of PYP Curriculum are

- Language , including learning of a second language, in our case French. The subsections can be broken up into Listening and speaking, Viewing and presenting, reading and writing.
- Mathematics which is taught through constructing meaning, transferring meaning and applying with understanding.
- Science Made up of Living things, Earth and Space, materials and matter and Forces and energy.
- Social Studies made up of Human systems and economic activities, social organisation and culture, continuity and change through time, human and natural environments and resources and the environment.
- Personal, Social and Physical Education. Students are involve in understanding identity, active living and interactions The Physical education side is made up of Individual pursuits (i.e. swimming and athletics), Movement composition (i.e. gymnastics, dance), Adventure challenges (i.e. working together to solve problems and accomplish a common goal) and Health related fitness (recognising the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and physical fitness)
- The Arts are made up of dance, drama, music and visual arts. The two common strands that connect the arts are creating and responding.

A CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Biblical Studies framework is a scope and sequence across the year levels, with Biblical teachings linked to the Units of Inquiry either through direct content or through connections to one or more of the PYP attitudes, concepts and learner profile characteristics. In addition to its links within the units of inquiry, one period is set aside each week for formal lessons in Biblical Studies. Short daily devotion sessions are also practised in the classroom and may involve class singing, reading from the Bible, discussing topics of interest, and prayer.

The College Chaplain conducts Chapel for the students at various times across the year, and particularly at significant occasions such as at Easter and at Christmas.



Language

Listening and speaking

Builds on the impressive command of a child's mother-tongue language. It encompasses all aspects of speaking and listening providing a balanced programme of meaningful and well planned opportunities for learners to participate as listeners and speakers. Purposeful talk allows learners to articulate thoughts as they construct and reconstruct meaning to understand the world around them. In an inquiry based environment, oral language exposes the thinking of the learner.

Visual language

Viewing and presenting

A balanced programme gives opportunities for students to experience both viewing and presenting. These processes involve interpreting, using and constructing visuals and multimedia in a variety of situations and for a range of purposes and audiences. They allow students to understand the ways in which images and language interact to convey ideas, values and beliefs. Acquiring skills related to information and communication technology is significant because of their persuasive influence in society.

Reading

Enthusiasm and curiosity are essential components in promoting the desire to read. Children at Plenty Valley experience and enjoy a wide range of interesting, informative, intriguing and creative reading materials. Students are required to read a range of texts for different purposes: these include fiction, non-fiction, reference material, instructions and the Bible.

Written language

Writing

Students spend daily time writing and are taught to write using different genres (e.g. narrative, recount and poetry writing) and for various audiences. They are taught the process of planning, drafting, revising and preparing presentation copies.

Word Inquiry

The students spend time investigating the relationship between sounds (phonemes), letters (graphemes) and meaning (morphemes), as they build their vocabulary. As well as being taught through specific lessons, these skills are actively reinforced across the curriculum as students apply their developing literacy skills.







Mathematics

The mathematics curriculum is categorised into five areas – Number; Space and Shape; Measurement; Data Handling; and Pattern and Function.

Mathematical Inquiry is a guided process in which students explore their mathematical understandings using relevant situations, hands-on tasks and concrete materials where applicable, to create new and deeper levels of understanding.

Biblical Studies and Devotions

One period is set aside each week for formal lessons in Biblical Studies. In addition, Biblical perspectives are reflected in all aspects of the curriculum. This is additional to the daily devotion sessions practised in the classroom and the biblical focuses covered in their units of inquiry. This session includes singing, prayer, scripture reading and quizzes. The major Christian festivals of Easter and Christmas are also studied and celebrated. Devotions are an important part of our day and involves class singing, reading from the Bible, discussing topics of interest, and prayer.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

All students participate in a weekly session that aims to develop skills, fitness and understanding of how their body works. Students have the opportunity to practice a range of activities during the year including athletics, swimming, team sports and individual sports. Enjoyment and the encouragement towards making healthy choices are essential outcomes of this program. Students in Year Prep-2 focus mainly on developing their fundamental motor skills and have an 8 week swimming program in term 3. Students in Year 3/4 start to then learn the basic skills, rules and concepts of sports through modified versions. They also have a 6 week Gymnastics program in term 1. Students in Year 5/6 focus on developing an extensive understanding and ability to complete more complex skills of a wide variety of sports. These are then reinforced through the interschool sport program.

SPORTS

Plenty Valley is a member of the Diamond Valley Primary Schools Sports Association, with 9 other local schools. All students in Year 5/6 are selected for a team in the summer and Winter sports. The students train for their sport once a week and play every Friday morning against another school.

All Year 3/4 students participate in the Friday 3/4 Sport program. The Year 6 Sport and House captains organise, set up and run this program as part of their leadership in the school. The students have the opportunity to learn modified games where they can develop their fundamental and sport specific skills. This is a great program that improves the skill level and self-esteem of all students involved.

HOUSE COMPETITION

A strong house system exists within Primary school with all students involved. This provides a means by which students meet regularly and participate in sport and other activities across level boundaries. House points are also used every day within the classroom to reward students who exceptionally show the schools attitudes. The four Houses are:

Crichton	Yellow
Meers	Blue
Schippers	Red
Upton	Green

The Year 3-6 student's partake in the House Carnivals which include Swimming, Cross County and Athletics. Students who do well in these competitions can then go on to represent the school at District, Division, Zone and State Championships.

The Year Prep-2 students participate in modified House Carnivals which include the Walk-A-Thon, Junior Athletics and Sports Day.



THE ARTS MUSIC

The music program at PVCC aims to introduce students to the elements of music, develop the student's aural discrimination, linking the sound to the symbol and broaden their experience of different styles of music. Four strands are taught, performing (singing and playing instruments), creating and composing, notation and listening and appreciation.

Music enables students to construct an understanding of their environment, recognise patterns and structure and develop cultural awareness. It contributes to a student's personal, social and physical development.

All students from Prep to Year Six participate in one lesson per week of classroom music. ICT is integrated into the delivery of the program in a variety of ways such as use of composition software, iPad applications and online music activities.

In addition there is an Instrumental Program which offers individual tuition on a wide range of instruments taught by private music teachers within school time.

There are a number of music ensembles, Primary Senior Choir, Junior Choir, Primary Orchestra and String Ensemble.

Performance opportunities range from evening recitals, assemblies, school events, year level and grade concerts and numerous community events. The musical production is a major focus every two years with all students participating.

Visual Arts

The primary school has its own primary art room and students attend one art class of 50 minute duration each week. Areas covered are drawing, painting, printing, construction, modelling, textiles and collage. Within this environment the students plan and create artworks in a variety of forms, both two and three dimensional and employing a range of skills, processes and techniques. Students are encouraged to explore their own ideas/imagination, feelings, and their understanding of the world organising art elements – line, shape, colour and texture to communicate this. The art program focuses on the creative process, elements of art, reflection and appreciation of the role of visual arts in society and celebrations. ICT is used at relevant times during the program to document the process and to create artworks.

Teaching and Learning Support (TLS) Department

Plenty Valley Christian College has a responsibility to enable each student to experience success by offering a range of opportunities that are relevant and engaging to the individual.

The role of the Teaching and Learning Support department (TLS) is to work alongside teachers and parents to maximise the learning outcomes for students. TLS works collaboratively across the school to assist with identification, intervention and enrichment for students with additional learning needs.



Access to TLS services

PVCC aims to work within a "Response to Intervention" model. PVCC determines support for individual students using a data based decision making process.

This may include but not be limited to:

- Standardised testing e.g. PATs TORCH tests, etc.
- Teacher assessments and observations e.g. Class tests, observations
- Screening and/or diagnostic assessments e.g. Dyslexia testing, APD screening
- Investigative 1:1 educational assessments specific to students learning needs e.g. PROBE, SWRT, YARC
- Other relevant allied health reports e.g. WISC-IV, Speech assessments
- And taking into account resource availability and timetable considerations.

Support programs and interventions

As well as meeting the needs of students through individual learning plans, in class support for Education Assistants and running both 1:1 and small group support sessions in both literacy and numeracy skills we have a number of structure programs to which students have access.

All programs run at PVCC are research based with evidence of successful outcomes. MiniLit is run as an early years literacy intervention program for students who require more intensive support in learning to read.

Quick smart is a middle to upper primary years program which offers students intensive support in either numeracy or literacy skills.

GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

In line with the Response to Intervention model, PVCC determines support for individual students using a data based decision making process. PVCC offers a range of opportunities for students to extend their knowledge and abilities in specific areas. As well as classroom differentiation, small group withdrawal programs are offered depending on the resources available, timetable considerations and individual learning needs.

This may include but not be limited to:

- External Competitions e.g. Tournament of Minds, Debating teams, French poetry competitions, Maths Olympiad
- Small group withdrawal e.g. Maths extension groups
- Internal school projects, e.g. School Newspaper
- Facilitate access to external enrichment program/ resources e.g. GATEWAYS



Student welfare

The College Chaplain and Psychologist work together with our classroom teachers and leadership team to ensure that proactive anti-bullying and social skills programmes are established and implemented across the Primary School.

Particular attention is paid to students or groups of students who are experiencing difficulties either at school or at home. Skill development sessions are held to support these students. These sessions endeavour to teach students skills and attitudes that will enable them to work their way through the difficulties. Restorative justice practices are employed in the Primary School where we endeavour to restore and improve relationships between students who may have damaged their relationship due to conflict.

Camping Programme

- P-2 Outdoor activity days
- Year 3 School Fun Night & Activity Day
- Year 4 Oasis Christian Campsite (Mt Evelyn)
- Year 5 Mill Valley Ranch
- Year 6 School Tour to Canberra

COLLEGE CONTACTS

Admissions Officer; Athelia Du Preez

Tel: 61 3 9717 7400

Email: athelia.duprez@pvcc.vic.edu.au

Further details on the College can be found at www.pvcc.vic.edu.au or contact the College on office@pvcc.vic.edu.au







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