**INVESTIGATIONS FRAMEWORK**

At Yeo Park Infants School, the teaching and learning programs are based on proven and well researched methodologies. They are underpinned by the following educational philosophies and methodologies.

**HATTIE**

* the more transparent the teacher makes the learning goals, then the more likely the student is to engage in the work needed to meet the goal.
* the more the student is aware of the criteria of success, then the more the student can see the specific actions that are needed to attain these criteria
* the more there is feedback about progress from prior to desired outcomes the more positive attributes to learning are developed

**WALKER EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY**

It is the teacher and the learning environment that must strive to engage the child. Not the child that must engage themselves in a disengaging environment with disinterested staff.

Walker Learning (WL) is an Australian-designed teaching and learning approach (pedagogy) that authentically personalizes learning and is developmentally and culturally appropriate. Learning is real, relevant, and meaningful for all children regardless of their age, culture, family context, socioeconomic background, or geographical position. Walker Learning has been developed over twenty years using an action research model. Walker Learning is the first pedagogy to be designed for Australian schools, successfully providing teaching and learning that:

* personalises and engages learners in active learning alongside explicit and formalised instruction
* is culturally and developmentally appropriate across all demographic regions of the country from remote indigenous communities to elite independent schools

The pedagogical platform places the child at the centre and uses developmental psychology, biology, and neurology alongside cultural and environmental influences as the basis for practical application across the Australian setting. Developmental psychology in recent years has been misinterpreted and misrepresented by some aspects of the educational academic forum with the assumption that the Piagetian model of a lockstep, monocultural stage ("norm") of developmental milestones prevails.

*Walker, Kath (2011). “Play Matters - Second Edition, Investigative and Exploratory Learning for Preschool to Grade 2.” Early Life Foundations*

**THE MONTESSORI EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY**

“To aid life, leaving it free, however, to unfold itself, that is the basic task of the educator.

Ours was a house for children, rather than a real school.

We had prepared a place for children, where a diffused culture could be assimilated, without any need for direct instruction... Yet these children learned to read and write before they were five, and no one had given them any lessons. At that time, it seemed miraculous those children four and a half should be able to write, and that they should have learned without the feeling of having been taught.

We puzzled over it for a long time. Only after repeated experiments did we conclude with certainty that all children are endowed with this capacity to ‘absorb’ culture. If this is true- we then argued- if culture can be acquired without effort, let us provide the children with other elements of culture. And then we saw them ‘absorb’ far more than reading and writing: botany, zoology, mathematics, geography, and all with the same ease, spontaneously and without getting tired.

And so we discovered that education is not something which the teacher does, but that it is a natural process which develops spontaneously in the human being. It is not acquired by listening to words, but in virtue of experiences in which the child acts on his environment. The teacher’s task is not to talk, but to prepare and arrange a series of motives for cultural activity in a special environment made for the child.” Maria Montessori

In a Montessori classroom, the teacher, child, and environment create a learning triangle. The classroom is prepared by the teacher to encourage independence, freedom within limits, and a sense of order. The child, through individual choice, makes use of what the environment offers to develop self, interacting with the teacher when support and/or guidance is needed.

*Montessori, Maria (1967). “The Absorbent Mind.”*

**REGGIO EMELIA EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY**

The Reggio Emilia philosophy is based upon the following set of principles:

* Children must have some control over the direction of their learning;
* Children must be able to learn through experiences of touching, moving, listening, and observing;
* Children have a relationship with other children and with material items in the world that children must be allowed to explore;
* Children must have endless ways and opportunities to express themselves.

In the Reggio approach, the teacher is considered a co-learner and collaborator with the child and not just an instructor. Teachers are encouraged to facilitate the child's learning by planning activities and lessons based on the child's interests, asking questions to further understanding, and actively engaging in the activities alongside the child, instead of sitting back and observing the child learning. "As partner to the child, the teacher is inside the learning situation" (Hewett, 2001).

Teachers' long-term commitment to enhancing their understanding of children is at the crux of the Reggio Emilia approach. .. the continuing evolution of their ideas and practices. ..providing extensive staff development opportunities, with goals determined by the teachers themselves… imperative that teachers become skilled observers of children in order to inform their curriculum planning and implementation.

While working on projects with the child, the teacher can also expand the child's learning by collecting data that can be reviewed at a later time. The teacher needs to maintain an active, mutual participation in the activity to help ensure that the child clearly understands what is being "taught". Teachers partner with colleagues, students, and parents in the learning process. For instance, they discuss their observations with them, as part of an ongoing dialogue. This allows them to be flexible in their plans, preparations, and teaching approaches.

Often, teachers listen to and observe children in the classroom. They also record what they observe. This helps them plan the curriculum with children’s interests in mind. It also helps them prepare the environment and teaching tools.

*Morrison, G.S. (2010). "Reggio Emilia". Education.com.*

**YEO PARK INFANTS SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

**Teaching and learning programs are underpinned by the following**

* 21st century learning is not all about technology…it is future proofing - ***Learning how to learn – how to set goals – how to strive – how to challenge oneself and risk mistakes***
* Learning and assessment are continuous – opportunities should be diverse – every experience should be seen as a learning opportunity and therefore an assessment or goal setting opportunity
* The learning environment is the stimulus – children must be highly engaged – teachers must find the way to engage each individual child so that they achieve their full potential
* Try something – fail – try it a new way
* Try something – succeed – challenge yourself further
* Make it interesting – make it timely
* Record, observe, collect data, proof and samples – how do you know?
* Teaching and learning programs should be in constant evolution. Whilst programs are underpinned by BOSTES outcomes and YPIS scope and sequences, no program should be written a term ahead. The teaching, learning and assessment should be continuous – therefore teaching and learning programs should continuously evolve and adapt.
* All students are catered for – differentiation in program, environment, stimulus, assessment, teaching style, goals and communication
* Feedback and goal setting is continuous

**INVESTIGATIONS**

**Time**

* Kindergarten – 3-5 sessions a week (as programs allow)
* Year 1 and 2 – 2-5 sessions a week (as programs allow)

**Classroom set up / provocations**

* Literacy and numeracy must always be a focus of provocations
* Themes or interests of students should also be a focus of provocations
* Classroom environments should be set up to provoke learning
* Classroom environments should be safe places for students to challenge themselves and risk mistakes – explicit teaching in risking mistakes and bouncing back is vital
* Teachers may set up inviting learning areas within their classroom
* Sometimes, Investigations times, particularly in Year 1 and 2 may take the form of a group work or individual project mutually decided with the teacher with inquiry or investigative learning and student interest and engagement at the core
* Sustainable practices are important
* Differentiation is at the core of Investigations – each child’s interests and learning styles are considered when programing and during Investigations sessions
* Goal setting and feedback must be timely throughout Investigations
* Every individual student will have one to one time with the teacher in a 2-week period
* Investigations must be programmed for and documented in teaching and learning programs
* Observations of students must be recorded – photographic evidence, written documentation and samples should all be collected and saved. These should be used as part of the teaching, learning and assessment cycle.
* Syllabus outcomes covered must be included in Investigations programming