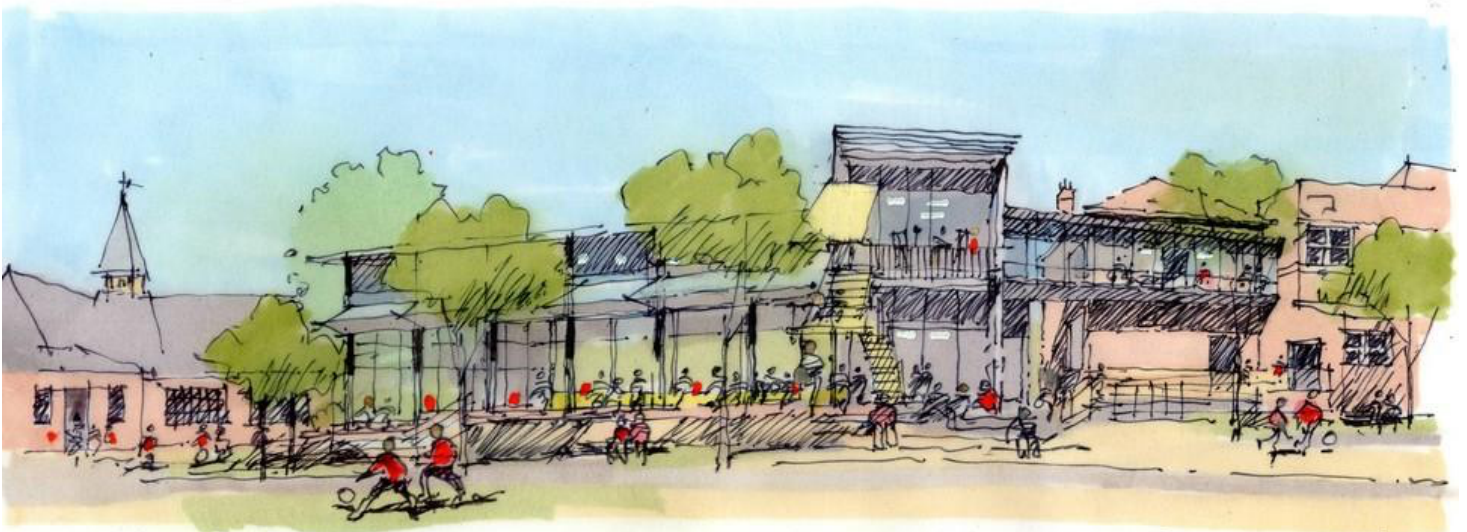




WALES STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL: URGENT INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES

STAGE 2 MASTERPLAN DEVELOPMENT



Delivering vital projects for our students and the wider Thornbury community and Northcote electorate

**FUNDING SUBMISSION
DECEMBER 2025**



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wales Street Primary School (WSPS), established in 1891 and located in Thornbury, is one of Darebin's largest and highest-performing primary schools. With enrolments growing from **566 students in 2022 to 615 in 2025**, WSPS is now operating at full capacity and faces critical infrastructure challenges that threaten its ability to deliver safe, inclusive, and contemporary education.

Despite being a high-demand school and a leader in delivering the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme, WSPS has not received capital investment since the 2019-20 Victorian State Budget. The school's ageing facilities and fundamentally inadequate spaces – rated by the Victorian School Building Authority as well below “poor” – have deteriorated to levels that pose serious barriers to meeting educational standards and needs of the growing school community.

Key Challenges:

- **Overcrowded and undersized classrooms:** 16 of 26 classrooms fall below the Department's recommended size, limiting modern teaching practices.
- **Inadequate hall and gymnasium:** Current hall is less than one-third the required size, preventing whole-school assemblies and effective PE programs.
- **Accessibility issues:** Upper levels of the Speight Street building remain inaccessible.
- **Unsafe outdoor spaces:** Ageing asphalt surfaces pose safety risks and lack shade, causing injuries and cancellations of outdoor activities.
- **Unsustainable reliance on parent fundraising:** While families have funded playgrounds and green spaces, the scale of required upgrades far exceeds community capacity.

Our Proposal – Stage 2 Masterplan: Arts and Wellbeing Hub. WSPS seeks urgent government investment to deliver:

- A **full-sized gymnasium and multipurpose performing arts space**
- A **new library with lift access** for inclusivity
- **Upgraded classrooms** and replacement of obsolete portables
- Increased **green spaces** and safe outdoor courts
- Improved connectivity and accessibility across the site

This Hub will serve as a **state-of-the-art community facility**, supporting after-hours use and fostering local engagement. Climate resilience and sustainability are central to the design, ensuring energy efficiency and future-proofing against extreme weather.

Why Now? WSPS is eligible for a gymnasium based on enrolment size and urgently needs modern facilities to maintain its high educational standards and wellbeing programs. Without investment, the school cannot meet the expectations of the Victorian Education vision for inclusive, contemporary learning environments.

Our Ask: We respectfully request your advocacy to secure **Stage 2 capital funding in the upcoming State Budget**. Timely support will ensure WSPS continues to provide equitable, high-quality education and remains a central, unifying presence in the Thornbury community.

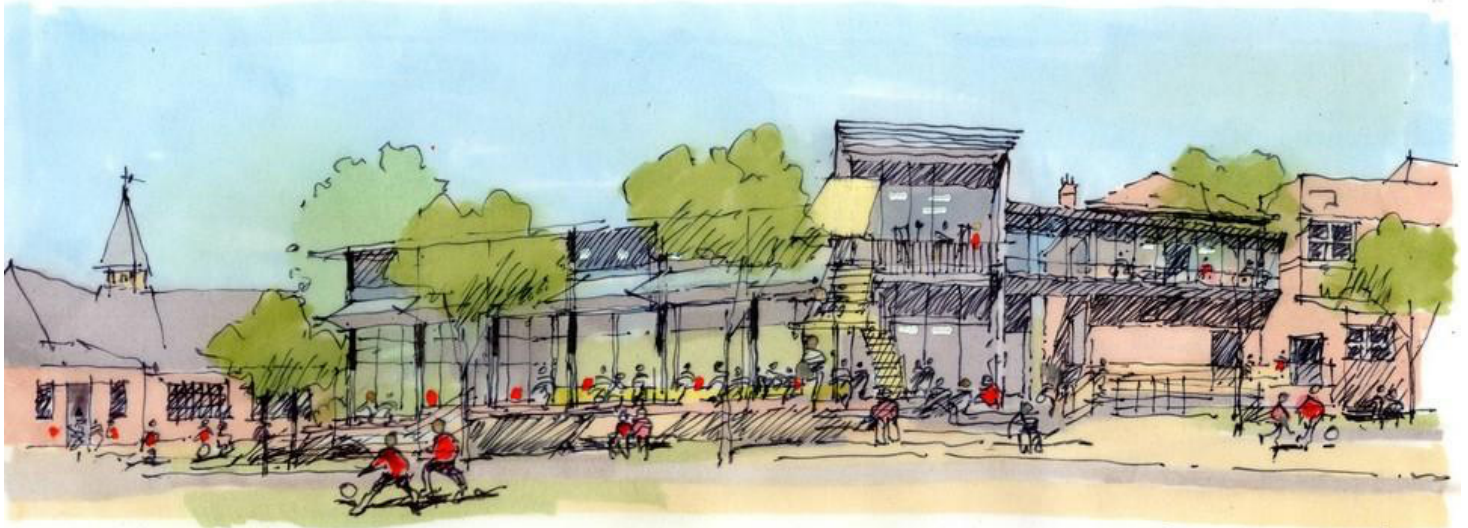
Wales Street Primary School Council looks forward to working with you to deliver this vital project for our students and the broader Northcote electorate.



DECEMBER 2025

SUBMISSION TO KAT THEOPHANOUS MP, LABOR MEMBER FOR NORTHCOTE

STAGE 2 MASTERPLAN DEVELOPMENT



SUMMARY

Established in 1891, Wales Street Primary School (WSPS) is one of the oldest and largest primary schools in the Darebin municipality, proudly serving the Thornbury community in Melbourne's northern suburbs. WSPS continues to be a high-demand local school, demonstrated by consistent growth in enrolment numbers, from 566 in 2022, to 615 today.

With sustained enrolment growth WSPS is now operating at full capacity and urgently requires infrastructure upgrades in alignment with the school's growth. Many of our existing classrooms are overcrowded, with small learning spaces that limit flexibility and constrain the delivery of contemporary teaching and learning programs. WSPS requires additional classrooms to meet current community needs and needs that will arise as enrolment demand continues to grow. We also must be prepared for the significant boost that the Thornbury Activity Centre Program will give to student body growth at WSPS and in our local area.

Our facilities are also ageing and no longer fit for purpose. We lack an indoor space to bring our 615 students and 30-40 teachers and staff together for assemblies, celebrations, and community events. Accessibility and equity of access for learning remain major challenges in our multi-story Speight Street Building, and we have significant safety concerns over our deteriorating grounds that are causing injuries to students, teachers and parents. Compounding these concerns, the Victorian School Building Authority has rated the school's condition to be below the "poor" threshold, ranking WSPS as the **worst-conditioned school in the Northcote electorate**, and the 5th worst-conditioned metropolitan primary school in Victoria.

This document provides an overview of WSPS and outlines our plans for the delivery of **Stage 2 masterplan capital works**, which we hope to work with you to achieve.

Stage 1 of our masterplan, completed in 2020–21, delivered valuable improvements but addressed only a portion of the school's needs. The **2022 Rolling Facilities Audit** confirmed that substantial works are still required to address our ageing infrastructure and ensure that WSPS can meet both current and future educational standards.

In line with your vision for all northern metropolitan schools to be well-equipped, modern and inclusive — and noting that WSPS is one of the largest schools in Darebin **not to have received capital funding since the 2019–2020 Victorian State Budget** — we believe it is both timely and necessary for our capital works program to be brought into alignment with other schools of similar size and profile.

WSPS indoor and outdoor facilities urgently require investment to ensure we are meeting expectations in the following critical areas:

- **Accessibility and inclusivity**
- **Contemporary and flexible teaching spaces**
- **Sustainable and energy-efficient infrastructure**
- **Safe, compliant learning and play areas**

A school of our age and scale requires significant capital to upgrade core learning environments and to deliver an appropriate hall/gymnasium facility for our current and growing school community. We propose the development of an **Arts and Wellbeing Hub**, a purpose-built space that serves as a central gathering place for students, staff and families while supporting the school's wellbeing, arts and community programs.

There is also substantial untapped potential for WSPS to provide a **state-of-the-art community hub** that can be shared with the broader Darebin community — strengthening local engagement, offering access to quality facilities, and supporting community partnerships.

The level of funding required to address these critical infrastructure needs extends well beyond the capacity of parent fundraising and school-generated resources. Government investment is essential to ensure WSPS can continue to provide high-quality, equitable education for current and future generations.



WHAT OUR COMMUNITY HAS TOLD US

A parent and teacher committee has worked hard to determine the next steps for WSPS's redevelopment for presentation to the Victorian State Government.

They identified the following priorities;

- No further loss of outdoor space
- Build up rather than out
- Connect our buildings
- A space for the whole community to meet
- Accessibility and inclusivity of outdoor and indoor spaces
- Need for green spaces: add sustainable soft surfaces, not more asphalt

We are currently unable to hold whole-school assemblies due to frequent rain and consistently high UV levels. Planned outdoor assemblies are often cancelled because of inclement weather or because grassed areas are wet and unsuitable for students to sit on. These gatherings play a vital role in building connection, celebrating achievements and strengthening our school community, yet our existing facilities cannot support them reliably.

School assemblies are an essential part of building a cohesive, inclusive, and values-driven school community. They provide a regular opportunity for students, staff, and families to come together to celebrate learning, recognise achievement, and reinforce the school's values, culture and shared expectations.

Assemblies also play a critical role in developing student confidence and leadership. They allow students to present, perform, and speak in front of their peers — skills that contribute directly to personal growth and future success. For staff, assemblies are a valuable platform to communicate priorities, showcase student learning, and strengthen connections across the whole school.

Importantly, assemblies extend beyond the school gates. They foster engagement with families and the broader community by welcoming parents, carers, and local partners to participate and share in the school's achievements. This regular connection strengthens community pride and reinforces the school's role as a central, unifying presence in the local area.

Investment in a school hall/gymnasium would directly enhance student wellbeing, engagement, and community connection by providing a safe, accessible, and purpose-built space for assemblies and whole-school gatherings. It would ensure that all students and families can participate fully, regardless of weather or logistical constraints, supporting the ongoing growth of a strong and inclusive school community. The hall would also be a great resource for the wider community and a place to host external events such as sporting or cultural events.



OUR ASK – WSPS ARTS AND WELLBEING HUB

To make Wales Street Primary School fully accessible to all the members of our community, and to deliver Stage 2 of the WSPS masterplan, we are seeking your support and advocacy for the development of an **Arts and Wellbeing Hub**.

This would consist of:

- A full-sized **gymnasium and multipurpose performing arts space**
- A **new library with lift facilities** providing accessibility to the second story of the Speight Street Building
- **Upgrades to classrooms** in the Speight Street building
- **4 double story portable classrooms** to replace obsolete LTC portables
- Increased **green spaces**
- A **Flexi-Pave outdoor basketball/netball court** to replace the current asphalt court that is hazardous, unsafe and contributing to injuries
- Improved access and movement between buildings

Community Benefits - after hours use

Development of the school facilities will also enable after hours use of our arts and wellbeing hub for the broader community. A range of opportunities for community groups and associations exist.

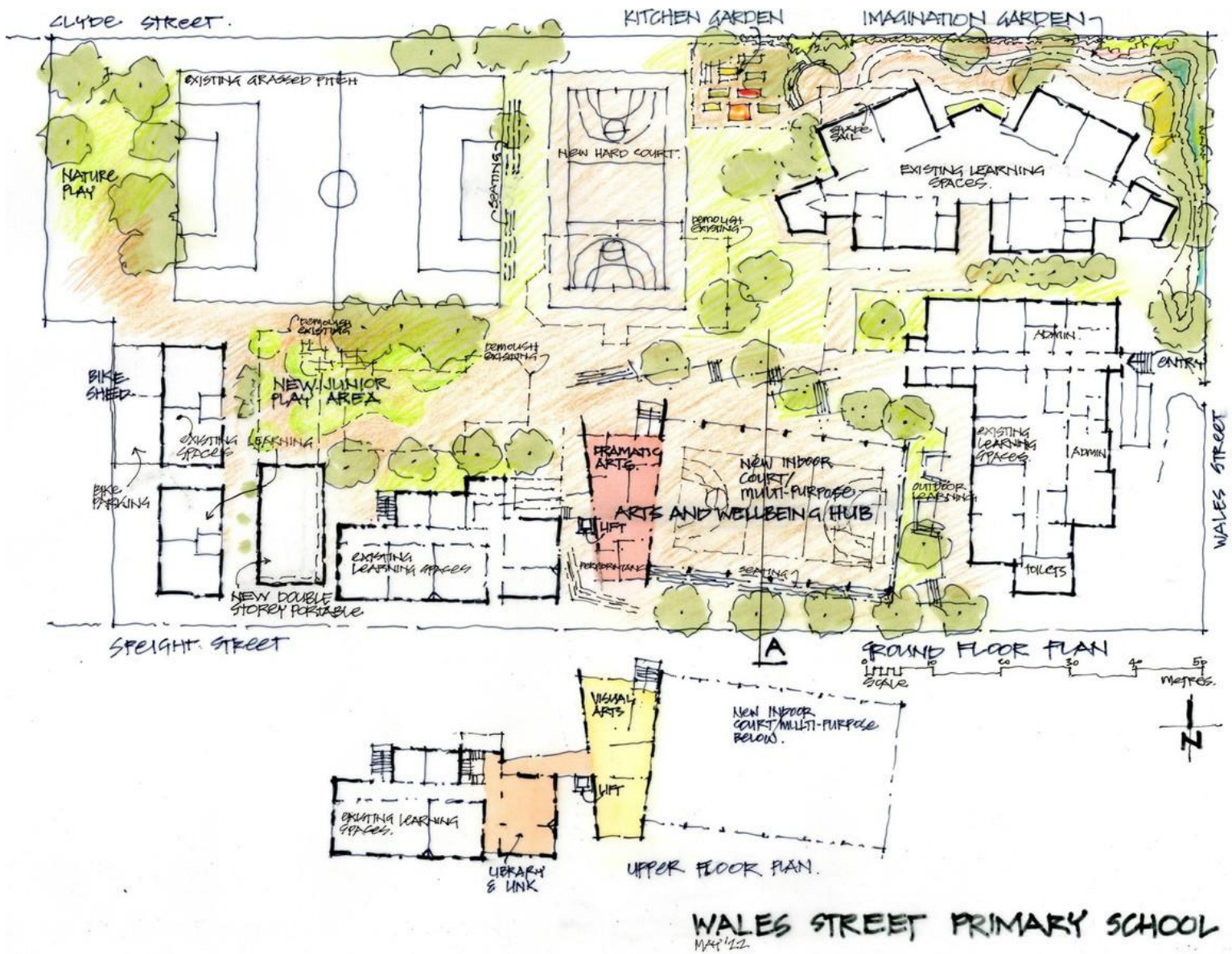
Climate Resilience

Climate resilience is a key focus of our design approaches for all indoor and outdoor spaces, with consideration given to maximising energy efficiency and minimising direct exposure to heat.

- Priority will be given to passive approaches for these considerations to minimise any increase in energy use and operating costs for the school, such as insulation, air flow, positioning of windows, and options for shading of buildings and outdoor spaces.

This proposal is informed by comprehensive feedback from our school community, analysis undertaken through our masterplan to identify the needs of a school of our size, alignment with our strategic priorities, and issues identified in our Rolling Facilities Audit. Collectively, this evidence demonstrates a clear and urgent need for Stage 2 funding to progress the next phase of our masterplan and ensure our facilities can adequately support our growing school community.

Community endorsed masterplan





Concept image of the Arts and Wellbeing Hub



VIEW FROM NORTH.



SECTION A

WALES STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL
MAY '22.



CHALLENGES FOR WALES STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL TODAY

Accessibility, Inclusivity, Sustainability and Safety

Stage 1 of our masterplan was completed in late 2021, following the Victorian State Government's 2018 allocation of \$4.1 million. This investment enabled the upgrade of the Wales Street building and the ground floor of the Speight Street building; however, funding constraints meant that a full refurbishment of the entire facility was not possible. Importantly, Stage 1 also delivered the long-overdue relocation of our main entrance to Wales Street and provided essential upgrades to the infrastructure required for our new administration area.

There remains substantial work required to ensure our school facilities meet the needs of both our current and future student population. Our masterplan confirms that, based on our enrolment numbers, the school is eligible for a gymnasium.

Our multi-purpose hall is only 224.73 m² — less than one-third of the 862 m² the School Facility Area Schedules recommend for a physical education gymnasium at a school of our size (enrolments over 475 students). This shortfall limits our ability to deliver PE programs effectively, host assemblies, or accommodate community events. A full-sized gymnasium would address this gap, providing safe, flexible, and fit-for-purpose space for students and the broader community.

Consultation with local principals who have progressed to Stage 2 and 3 funding indicates that new classrooms are now typically built at approximately 63 square metres (7m x 9m). Of our 26 classrooms, only ten meet or exceed this size. The remaining 16 are undersized — including one that falls short by 18 square metres— significantly limiting our current teaching and learning practices as mandated by the education department.

Additional infrastructure pressures include the need to replace an ageing LTC portable scheduled for removal more than a decade ago, but still in use today. Our library and art spaces also require major upgrades, with the library having been relocated five times to accommodate other class needs, including responding to water damage.

The upper levels of the Speight Street building remain inaccessible for members of our community and require substantial modernisation. Ventilation is also inadequate, with windows on the upper levels unable to be opened.

Our current hall is similarly constrained. While it is used for limited indoor sports, before and after school care, and performing arts, it is not large enough to support an indoor basketball game or host inter-school sport onsite despite our school's size. The hall can only accommodate half the school cohort for assemblies, with minimal space for parent attendance. Outdoor assembly space is also unsuitable, offering no shade or weather protection.



Finally, outdoor play and learning areas consist largely of hard, abrasive, uneven surfaces with no shelter, contributing to safety risks, injuries, and health concerns in extreme weather. In 2025, 230 injuries that required attention by the school nurse occurred on the abrasive, uneven basketball courts.

Inadequate spaces for a school of our size

The school site comprises three main buildings — Speight, Clyde and Wales — which accommodate classrooms, a multipurpose space, an art room, a library, a Light Timber Construction (LTC) building, and two additional relocatable classrooms. Despite this, the main teaching and learning spaces at Wales Street Primary School are inadequate for a school of our size. Constructed between 1891 and 1915, these buildings are in urgent need of upgrade and maintenance. Specialist areas are not fit for purpose, there is insufficient room for sports and performing arts programs, and the school community cannot gather together under one roof. The LTC building, never intended for long-term use, also remains in operation well beyond its expected lifespan.

Furthermore, the age of the older buildings and the ad hoc layout of newer facilities have resulted in limited connectivity across the site. Learning areas are fragmented, with grades operating in siloed or portable spaces rather than within a cohesive, modern learning environment.

Limited green / outdoor spaces

Our school grounds offer limited interconnected play spaces and very few shaded areas. Many of these spaces consist of ageing hard, abrasive surfaces that contribute to frequent falls and injuries and are in urgent need of replacement and upgrade. Recent compliance checks have identified multiple trip hazards across asphalted areas surrounding the buildings and court spaces. After-school sports are conducted on uneven, unshaded asphalt surfaces that become extremely hot during summer and are often unusable in winter, resulting in regular cancellations.

School surveys consistently show that outdoor learning and play spaces are highly valued by our community, particularly for supporting student wellbeing, fostering a strong connection with nature, caring for the environment, and supporting our commitment to Reconciliation. These priorities are deeply embedded in our curriculum and in the PYP Learner Profiles, which encourage students to become responsible guardians of the planet and active contributors to a better world. Our Sustainability Club with 25 active members, together with our Junior School Council, plays a significant role in improving and caring for our local natural environment.

Collectively, this evidence demonstrates a clear and urgent need for Stage 2 funding to progress the next phase of our masterplan. Additional investment is essential to ensure our facilities are safe, inclusive, educationally appropriate, environmentally aligned, and capable of supporting the needs of our growing school community well into the future.



Unsustainable dependence on parent contributions to improve major school infrastructure

While our parent community has generously supported incremental upgrades to our grounds through contributions, fundraising and working bees, the scale of capital works now required is far beyond what can reasonably be expected of families. Significant investment is needed to create green, functional and future-focused outdoor learning and play spaces.

Examples of parent-funded improvements include:

- **AstroTurf Oval (2011)**: Planned and delivered over a number of years through fundraising and parent levies, providing a safe and reliable surface for PE lessons and community use.
- **Nature Play Adventure Playground and Outdoor Classroom (2021)**: Entirely funded through extensive volunteer effort and parent fundraising, including proceeds from many years of a highly successful school fete and other community events.
- **Imagination Garden (2024)**: A much-loved play space featuring sandpits, climbing structures and water pumps, developed with strong parent financial contributions and community support. Located at the corner of Wales and Clyde Streets, it is one of the school's most popular outdoor areas.
- **New Pirate Ship Playground (2025)**: Delivered through recent parent fundraising efforts, this significant play structure provides an engaging and imaginative play environment for students of all ages, further demonstrating the depth of community commitment to enhancing school facilities.

These projects highlight the dedication and generosity of our families. However, relying on parent contributions to deliver essential infrastructure is no longer sustainable or equitable. The extensive capital upgrades identified in our masterplan require government investment to ensure all students have access to safe, inclusive and modern facilities.



NEXT STEPS

Wales Street Primary School is seeking the Victorian Government's support for the next stage of our Stage 2 masterplan: the Arts and Wellbeing Hub.

Our school, with a proud 135 year history, is experiencing steady enrolments and increasing demand for modern learning spaces. The proposed Hub will provide dedicated areas for arts, performance, and wellbeing programs, and a full-sized gymnasium. These facilities will enhance student engagement, creativity, and social-emotional development and physical health.

We respectfully request that you raise this proposal with The Minister for Education, The Hon. Ben Carroll, to secure funding in the upcoming State budget. Timely support will ensure our students benefit from facilities that meet learning and wellbeing needs and provide inspiring learning environments that set them up for lifelong success.

We look forward to working with you to deliver this vital project for our students and the wider Thornbury community and Northcote electorate.

- Wales Street Primary School Council

IMAGE GALLERY

Infrastructure challenges at Wales Street Primary School

Poor drainage and flooding. WSPS is not future-proofed against climate change and grounds flood regularly in heavy rain.



Deteriorating and degrading buildings. Roofs regularly leak.



Unsafe Ground Conditions. Uneven, abrasive, asphalt around the school and on our courts causes trip hazards and extreme temperatures in summer.





Inadequate, undersized classrooms in the Speight Building and Light Timber Construction Building. Many classrooms require significant upgrades, being overcrowded, small in size, and inaccessible for some students.

Image (A) shows an undersized classroom on the third floor of the Speight Building that is inaccessible to students and teachers with e.g. leg injuries, including those suffered on the uneven, abrasive basketball courts.

Image (B) shows an outdated, undersized, classroom in a Light Timber Construction portable building that remains operational well beyond its expected lifespan, despite never intended for long-term use, and scheduled for removal more than 10 years ago.





Undersized Hall and Physical Education Gymnasium. The image demonstrates overcrowding in our hall during assemblies with only half of Wales Street Primary School. Our hall is only 224.73 m² — less than one-third of the 862 m² recommended by the School Facility Area Schedules for a physical education gymnasium at a school of our size. This shortfall limits our ability to hold whole-school assemblies or deliver PE programs effectively. Planned outdoor whole-school assemblies are frequently cancelled because of inclement weather or consistently high UV levels.



ABOUT WALES STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL

Celebrating 135 years in 2026, Wales Street Primary School (WSPS) is a progressive, internationally minded school community operating within largely historic facilities, many of which were constructed between 1891 and 1915. Located in the northern suburb of Thornbury, Melbourne, WSPS continues to serve a diverse and growing community.

With a Department of Education allocated capacity of 650 students, the school currently enrolls 615 students in 2025, a level that has increased from 566 in 2022. Our staffing profile includes 32 full-time equivalent staff, comprising a Principal, two Assistant Principals, a Leading Teacher, three Learning Specialists and 17 Education Support staff across classroom integration, administration and specialist assistance roles.

Since 2016, WSPS has been the only primary school in Darebin authorised to deliver the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP) — a unique, student-centred approach grounded in global best practice and informed by contemporary educational research. The PYP provides a future-focused learning framework that equips young people to navigate and thrive in an increasingly complex world. It is internationally recognised as a model of excellence and innovation in primary education.

A High Performing School

WSPS is recognised as one of the top-performing schools in our area, with consistently high percentages of students exceeding expected standards in both literacy and numeracy. Our NAPLAN and Victorian Curriculum results reflect this strong performance: **87% of Year 3 and 88% of Year 5 students achieve in the exceeding or strong bands for Reading**, and **81% of Year 3 and 82% of Year 5 achieve in the exceeding or strong bands for Numeracy**. These outcomes are consistently comparable to, and often exceed, those of 'like' schools, demonstrating the strength of our teaching and learning programs and the high expectations we hold for all students.



The WSPS mission

Wales Street Primary School provides an inclusive and collaborative learning environment for students, staff and families — one that promotes high expectations and nurtures lifelong learners who contribute meaningfully to both local and global communities.

Our vision is for students to be part of a diverse, community-minded school that is dedicated to lifelong learning and supports every child to achieve their personal best. We work toward this vision by enabling students to be:

- Independent, creative and self-motivated
- Active inquirers within the local community and the wider world
- Reflective thinkers who are socially, environmentally and digitally responsible
- Proud of their own growth and the achievements of others

Our purpose is to equip students with the academic, social and emotional skills needed to become responsible citizens in a rapidly changing world. We promote academic excellence while nurturing each student's individual talents and fostering community-minded individuals who embrace diversity and show respect for themselves and others.

Wales Street Primary School cultivates a strong sense of community and belonging. We provide a supportive and inclusive environment in which happy, healthy and resilient students and staff can perform at their best. Our transdisciplinary approach to the Victorian Curriculum enables students to realise their full academic, creative and social potential. Inquiry-based learning connects classroom experiences to real-world contexts, broadening students' understanding and deepening their engagement.

Beyond intellectual rigour and high academic expectations, we place significant emphasis on self-management, wellbeing and responsible citizenship. Students are encouraged to become critical and compassionate thinkers, active decision-makers in their learning, and lifelong learners who contribute positively to the world around them.



Our Values

The Wales Street Primary School community is united in its belief that the values of **Kindness, Respect, Responsibility and Perseverance** are central to the ethos and culture we aspire to foster in all students. These values guide the way we learn, interact and contribute as members of a diverse and supportive school community.

At WSPS, these core values provide a clear and consistent framework for the development of essential personal and social capabilities. They underpin our commitment to nurturing students' **self-esteem, interpersonal and communication skills, resilience, and capacity for leadership**. Through explicit teaching, modelling and everyday practice, students are encouraged to demonstrate these values in their learning, relationships and decision-making.

By embedding these values across all aspects of school life — from classroom practice to the playground, from student voice opportunities to broader community engagement — we promote a culture where students learn to take responsibility for themselves and others, show empathy, and persist in the face of challenges. These qualities help cultivate a strong sense of belonging, community pride and agency, empowering students to contribute positively to their school and the world beyond it.

UNDERSIZED LEARNING BASE, CLASSROOMS AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION GYMNASIUM

With sustained enrolment growth WSPS is now operating at full capacity and urgently requires infrastructure upgrades in alignment with the school's growth. Many of our existing classrooms are overcrowded, with small learning spaces that limit flexibility and constrain the delivery of contemporary teaching and learning programs.

WSPS requires additional classrooms to meet current community needs and needs that will arise as enrolment demand continues to grow, and as we prepare for the significant boost that the Thornbury Activity Centre Program will give to student body growth at WSPS and in our local area.

Our current hall is similarly constrained. It is not large enough to hold whole-school assemblies for our 615 students and 30-40 teachers and staff. The hall can only accommodate half the school cohort for assemblies, with minimal space for parent attendance. Our outdoor assembly space is also unsuitable, offering no shade or weather protection. Outdoor assemblies are often cancelled because of inclement weather or because grassed areas are wet and unsuitable for students to sit on.

These gatherings are vital for building connection, celebrating achievements and strengthening our school community, yet our existing facilities cannot support them reliably.

The following tables demonstrate how significantly undersized the learning base, classrooms and multi-purpose hall (Physical Education Gymnasium) are at Wales Street Primary School.

The Learning Base and Classrooms at Wales Street Primary School are undersized. Local schools who have progressed to Stage 2 and 3 funding have new classrooms typically built at approximately 63 square metres (7m x 9m). Of our 26 classrooms at Wales Street Primary School, only 10 meet or exceed this size (see Table 1). The remaining 16 are undersized — including one that falls short by 18 square metres—significantly limiting our current teaching and learning practices as mandated by the Department of Education.

Table 1. Undersized Classrooms and Learning Base at Wales Street Primary School compared to the School Facility Area Schedules – Primary (Standard)

LEARNING BASE				
WSPS Building	WSPS Class	Classroom Dimensions Length x Width (metres)	Classroom Size (square metres)	Facility Area Schedules - Primary (Standard) Learning Base 600 Enrolments (square metres)
WALES STREET	2A	7.2 X 8.1	58.32	
	2B	7.2 X 8.1	58.32	
	2C	7.2 X 8.1	58.32	
	2D	7.2 X 8.1	58.32	
	1C	7.2 X 7.7	55.44	
	1D	7.2 X 7.7	55.44	
CLYDE STREET	4A	8.0 X 8.0	64	
	4B	8.0 X 8.0	64	
	4C	8.0 X 8.0	64	
	3A	8.0 X 8.0	64	
	3B	8.0 X 8.0	64	
	3C	8.0 X 8.0	64	
SPEIGHT STREET LOWER	6A	8.1 X 7.3	59.13	
	6B	8.0 X 7.4	59.2	
	6C	8.0 X 7.3	58.4	
ATTIC	6D	4.3 X 10.5	45.15	
SPEIGHT STREET UPPER	5A	8.1 X 7.5	60.75	
	5B	8.1 X 7.3	59.13	
	5C	8.1 X 7.4	59.2	
	5D	8.1 X 7.4	59.2	
ST DAVID 1	1A	7.3 X 7.2	52.56	
	1B	7.1 X 7.1	50.41	
ST DAVID 2	FA	9.0 X 8.5	76.5	
	FB	9.0 X 8.5	76.5	
	FC	9.0 X 8.5	76.5	
	FD	9.0 X 8.5	76.5	
WSPS Total Learning Base 615 enrolments			1597.29	
Facility Area Schedule - Primary (Standard) Total Learning Base 600 enrolments				2074
WSPS Learning Base UNDERSIZED			476.71	

The Hall at Wales Street Primary School is undersized. Our multi-purpose hall is 224.73 m² — approximately one-third of the 862 m² recommended by the School Facility Area Schedules for a Physical Education Gymnasium at a school of our size (enrolments over 475 students). This shortfall limits our ability to deliver PE programs effectively, host assemblies, or accommodate community events. A full-sized gymnasium would address this gap, providing safe, flexible, and fit-for-purpose space for students and the broader community.

Table 2. Undersized Physical Education Gymnasium at Wales Street Primary School compared to the School Facility Area Schedules – Primary (Standard)

SCHOOL COMMUNITY HUB				
Physical Education Gymnasium	Dimensions Length x Width (metres)	Size (square metres)	Facility Area Schedules - Primary (Standard) School Community Hub 600 Enrolments Size (square metres)	
WSPS	(19.3 X 13.3) - (9.4 X 3.4 - office)	224.73		
Facility Area Schedule - Primary (Standard) School Community Hub 600 enrolments				862
WSPS Physical Education Gymnasium UNDERSIZED		637.27		

WALES STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT GROWTH

Enrolment data for Foundation years from 2024 to 2026 shows consistent intake numbers, primarily driven by sibling enrolments and students from the WSPS zoned area. Applications from outside the zone were significantly higher than accepted places, indicating strong demand beyond the designated catchment.

Key Insights: (see table below)

- **Sibling enrolments** remain steady and fully accepted across all years.
- **Zoned enrolments** show minor declines, with a small number of families declining offers.
- **Non-zoned applications** far exceed acceptances, suggesting high interest from outside the school's catchment zone, but strict adherence to enrolment policy.

Strong Foundation enrolment performance, combined with sustained growth across all year levels, has driven a significant increase in WSPS student numbers, from **566 in 2022 to 615 in 2025**. WSPS now urgently requires additional classrooms to meet current capacity and to accommodate the significant boost in enrolment demand that will arise from the Thornbury Activity Centre Program.

YEAR AND CATEGORY OF ENROLMENT INTO FOUNDATION	NUMBER OF FOUNDATION STUDENTS ENROLLED	DECISION ON ENROLMENT
2024 FOUNDATION		
SIBLINGS	39	39 ACCEPTED
WSPS ZONED SCHOOL	37	4 DECLINED
NOT ZONED Includes appeals, compassionate grounds & PYP specific reasons	8	36 APPLIED, 28 DENIED
TOTAL ENROLLED	84	
2025 FOUNDATION		
SIBLINGS	41	40 ACCEPTED
WSPS ZONED SCHOOL	33	7 DECLINED
NOT ZONED Includes appeals, compassionate grounds & PYP specific reasons	13	39 APPLIED, 26 DENIED
TOTAL ENROLLED	86	
2026 FOUNDATION		
SIBLINGS	37	37 ACCEPTED
WSPS ZONED SCHOOL	36	1 DECLINED
NOT ZONED Includes appeals, compassionate grounds & PYP specific reasons	10	30 APPLIED, 20 DENIED
TOTAL ENROLLED	83	

INJURIES SUSTAINED AT BASKETBALL COURT AREA AT WALES STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL – 2025

Summary of concerns with surface of basketball court area.

The surface in this area is asphalt. This surface in this area is cracked and uneven in some parts. There are indentations, holes and raises of the asphalt in some parts. When the area becomes wet due to rainfall it can be slippery, and some areas can fill with water causing puddles. The raised areas create a tripping hazard.

Across 2025, the WSPS injury log records multiple categories of injuries occurred to students in the basketball court area. In total **230 injuries have been recorded on the basketball court area in 2025** that required attention by the school nurse.

Aggregating the term-by-term counts shows that abrasions to knees were the most common (83 in total), and other injuries/slips/trips and falls were also frequent (43 in total). There have been a substantial number of abrasions to elbows, hips and hands, with falls also causing injuries to multiple parts of the body.

Key Injury Figures:

Most common injury in 2025: 83 incidents of abrasions to knees.

Multi-site injuries: 29 incidents affecting multiple body parts.

Severity indicators: 8 injuries required parent pick-up; 7 injuries required parent pick-up and medical follow-up.

Log of Injuries Sustained at Basketball Court Area – 2025

Types of injuries sustained in 2025	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
Abrasions to Hips	8	7	4	3
Abrasions to knees	22	22	15	24
Abrasions to hands	4	3	5	4
Abrasions to Elbow	6	3	4	8
Injuries to Multiple parts of body	16	3	3	7
Other injuries, Slips, Trips & falls	11	12	10	10
Injuries requiring parent pick up	2	1	2	3
Injuries requiring parent pick up/medical follow up	1	3	2	1
Staff injury				1
TOTAL NUMBER OF INJURIES	70	54	45	61
TOTAL NUMBER OF INJURIES IN 2025				230

VICTORIAN SCHOOL BUILDING AUTHORITY ASSESSMENT OF WALES STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL IS BELOW THE ‘POOR’ THRESHOLD

The recent report by *The Age* (21 December 2025)¹, drawing directly on Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA) assessments, highlights the troubling condition of facilities and infrastructure at Wales Street Primary School.

According to the VSBA’s own 2023 condition assessments of public-school infrastructure in Victoria, **Wales Street Primary School received a condition score of 3.0**, placing it **well below the “poor” threshold of 3.25**, and identifying it as a school in **critical need of repair and upgrade**.

This 3.0 rating by the VSBA places Wales Street Primary School as:

- The **5th worst**-conditioned metropolitan primary school in Victoria (see Chart A)
- The **19th worst**-conditioned school in Victoria
- The worst-rated and **only school** in the State Electorate of **Northcote** and Federal Electorate of **Cooper** with a score below 3.25
- The worst-rated and **only school** in both the electorates of **Northcote** and **Cooper** to appear on the list of the 300-worst conditioned schools in Victoria.

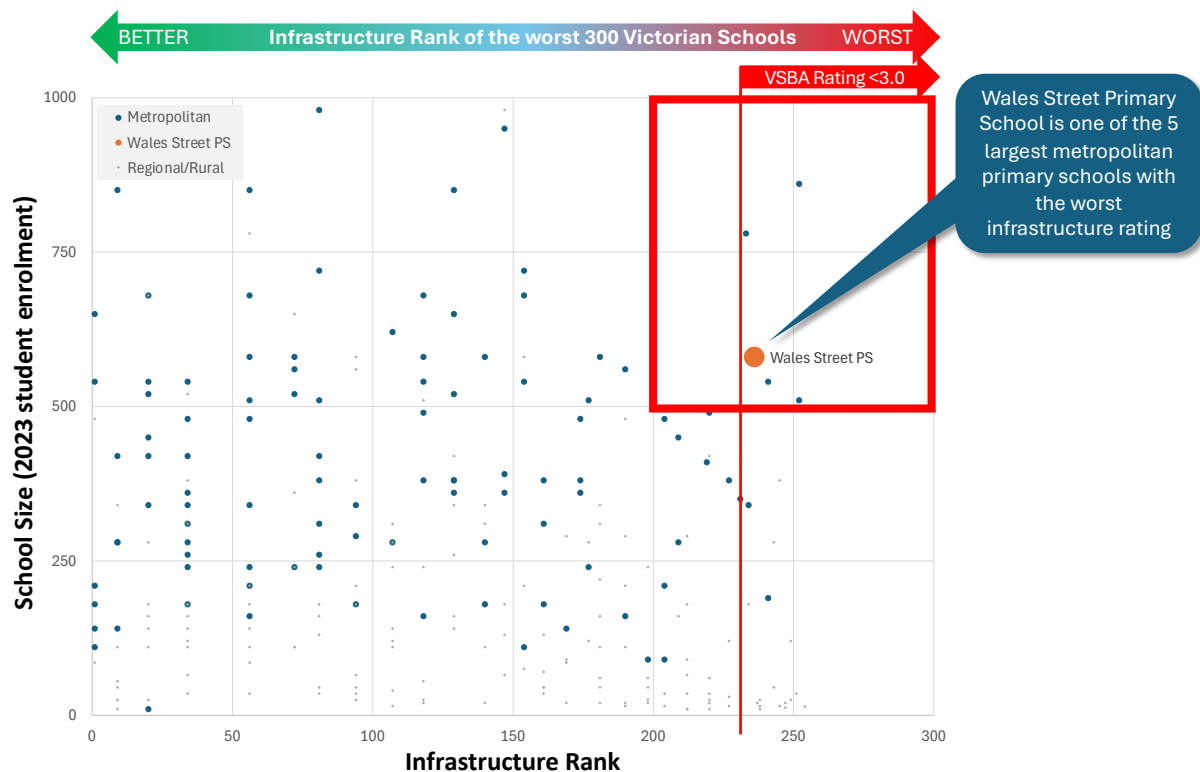


Chart A. *Wales Street Primary School is one of the five largest schools among those with the worst infrastructure ratings, meaning a significant number of students and teachers are being affected daily by deteriorating conditions that fall short of what families within our school community should expect* (Sources: 1; enrolment data from assorted websites).

The VSBA’s rating leaves no ambiguity: Wales Street Primary School’s condition score of 3.0 signals significant issues requiring urgent rectification that must be prioritised to ensure a safe, inclusive, modern learning environment for students.

1. Grant McArthur. More than 200 Victorian public schools urgently need repair. Check if yours is one of them. *The Age*, 21 December 2005. <https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/more-than-200-victorian-public-schools-urgently-need-repair-check-if-yours-is-one-of-them-20251212-p5nn5j.html>

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT IN NORTHCOTE ELECTORATE STATE PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Wales Street Primary School’s funding allocation of \$4.1M in 2018-2019 is one of the lowest among major schools in the Northcote electorate, despite having one of the highest enrolments (615 students). Most other schools with similar or even smaller enrolments received two to four times more funding, indicating a clear disparity in infrastructure investment.

The tables and map below reveal that Wales Street Primary School has received significantly less investment from the Victorian Government compared to other schools in our electorate.

Table 1. Comparative Victorian Government Investment into Northcote Electorate Primary schools since 2018. (Wales Street Primary School in Red)

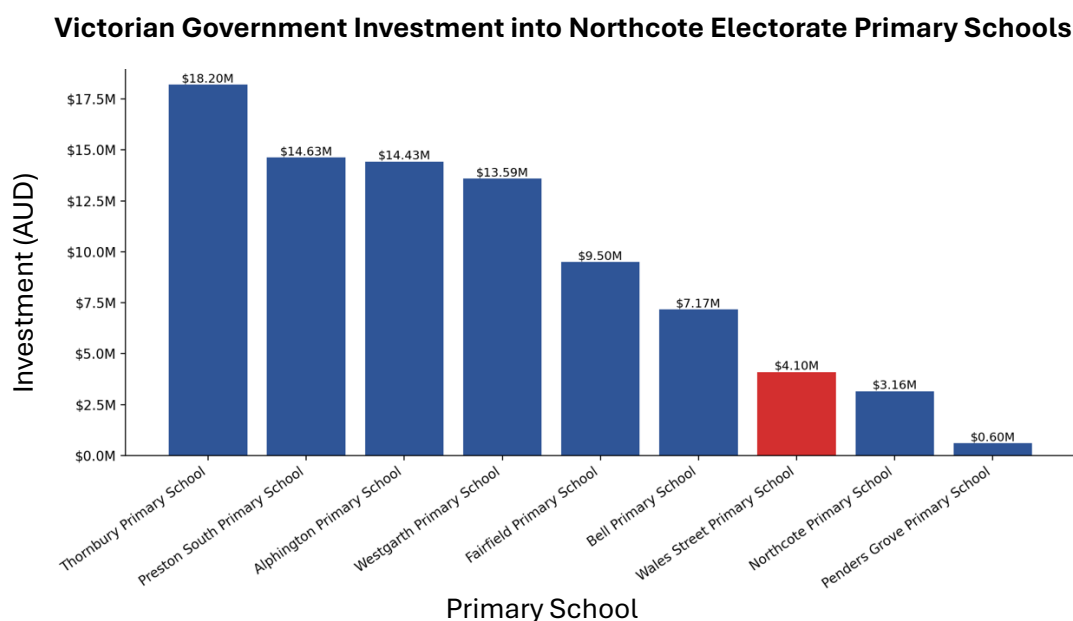


Table 2. Per-Student Victorian Government Investment into Northcote Electorate Primary schools since 2018. (Wales Street Primary School in Red)

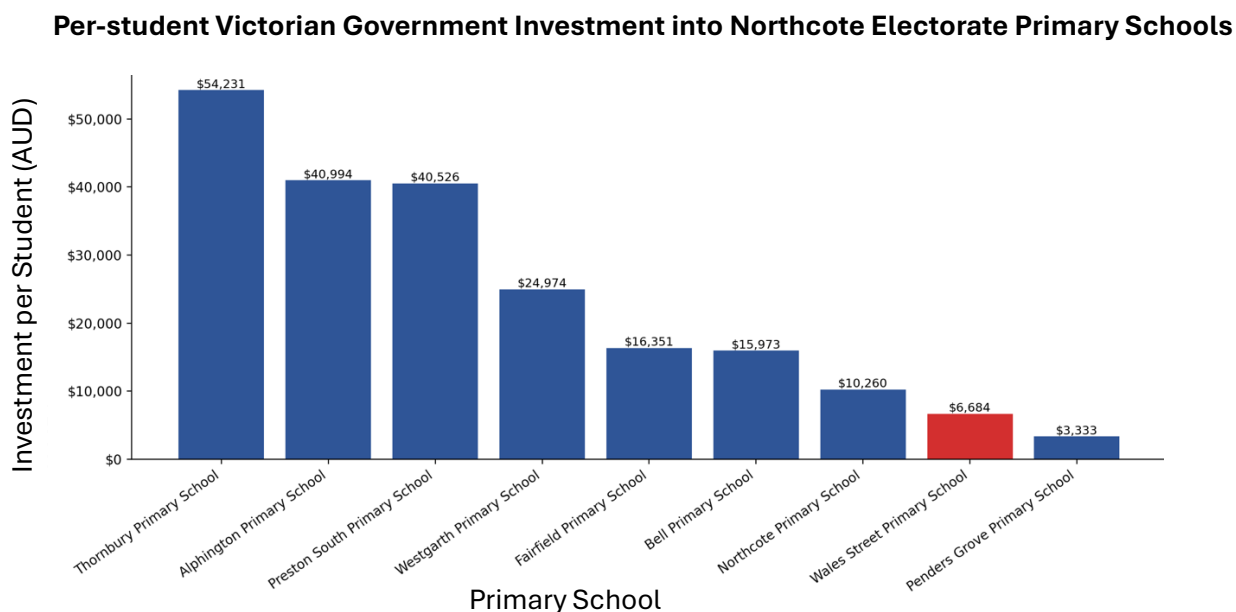


Table 3. Victorian Government Investment versus Student Enrolment in Northcote Electorate Primary schools since 2018. (Wales Street Primary School in Red)

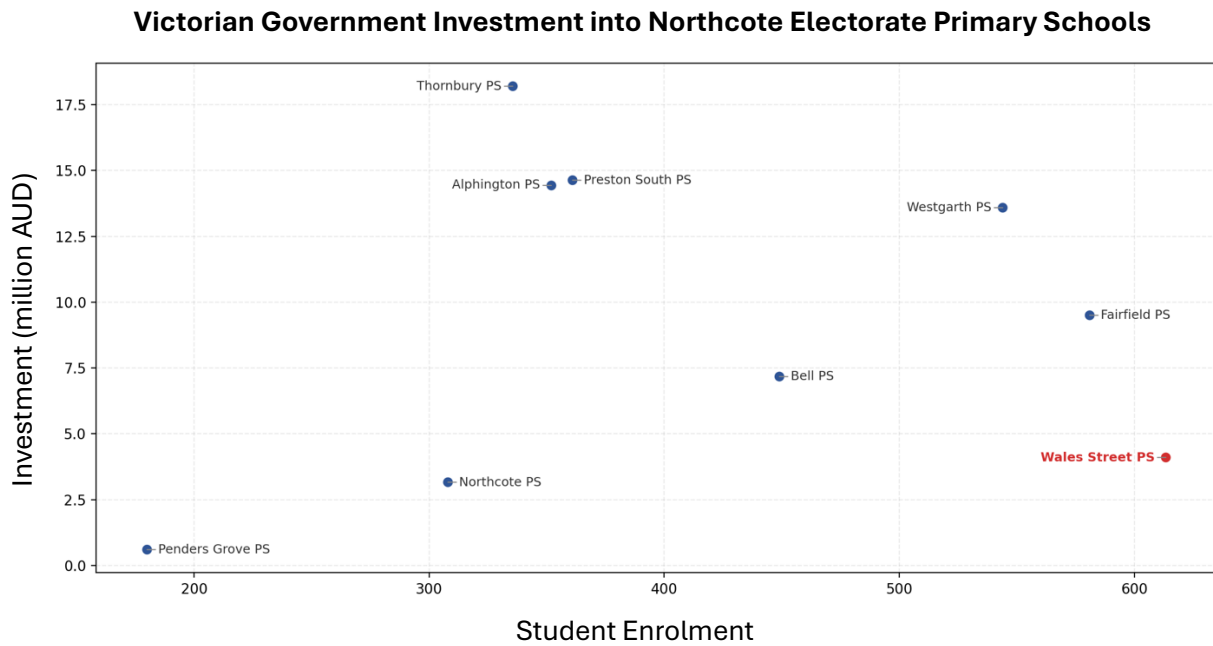
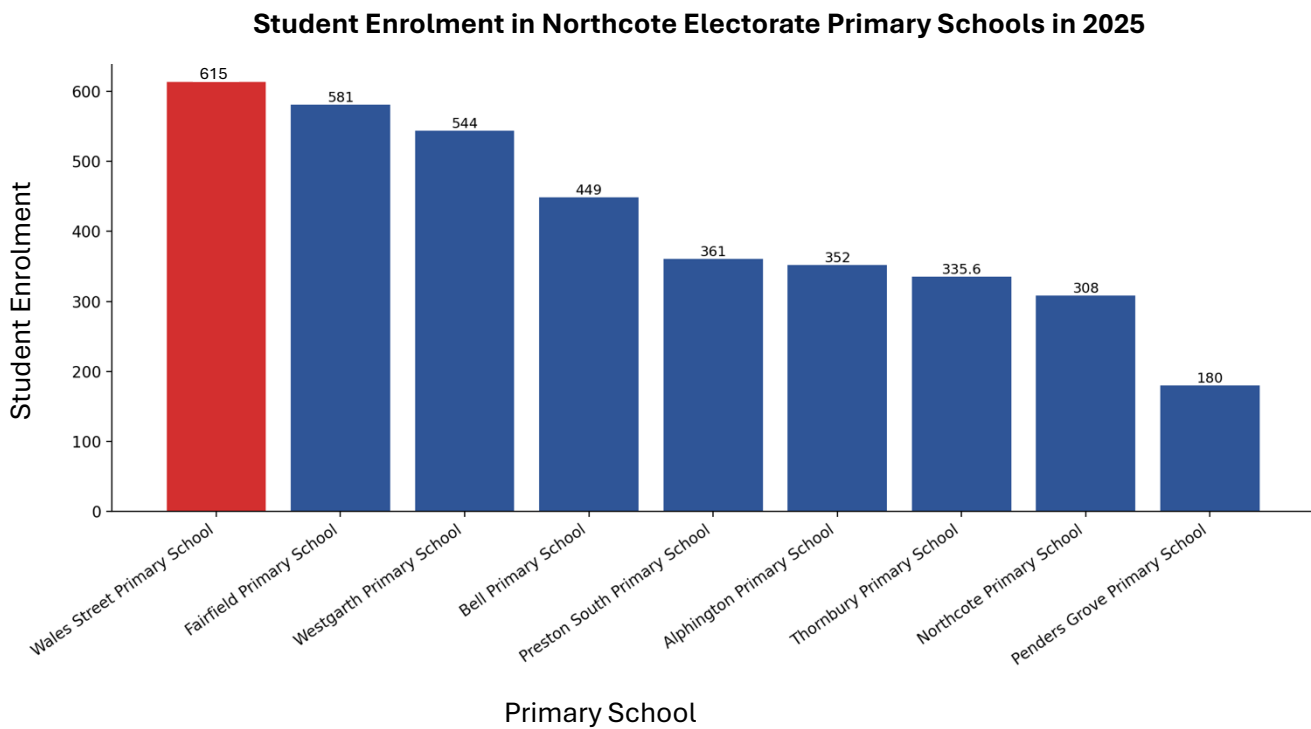


Table 4. Student Enrolment across Northcote Electorate Primary Schools in 2025.



VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT IN NORTHCOTE ELECTORATE STATE PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Wales Street Primary School	
Student Enrolment	615
Investment	Upgrade and modernisation Upgraded the school's tired old facilities by transforming administration areas in Block A into specialist STEM, withdrawal and collaboration learning spaces. Relocated the administration areas to Block B, making them more functional for staff.
Budget	\$4.1M
Status	Delivered 2021

Bell Primary School	
Student Enrolment	449
Investment	Upgrade and modernisation. Upgrading and modernising the school. This includes building a 2-storey community hub and Prep-Year 1 learning centre. Updates to the library and main building.
Budget	\$7.172M
Status	Delivered 2024

Northcote Primary School	
Student Enrolment	308
Investment	Upgrade and Modernisation Delivered a new school entrance, upgraded essential services, and extensively refurbished blocks A and C.
Budget	\$3.16M
Status	Delivered 2020

Penders Grove Primary School	
Student Enrolment	180
Investment	New toilets and upgrade of play spaces
Budget	\$600K
Status	Delivered 2025

Fairfield Primary School	
Student Enrolment	581
Investment	Upgrade and Modernisation Stage 1 upgraded facilities to accommodate enrolment growth at Fairfield Primary School. The new facilities, which include a 2-storey building next to the main campus on Wingrove Street, allow for an extra 200 local students. Demolished old classrooms at the Langridge Street campus, and replaced them with landscaped play areas. Stage 2 - demolished an existing classroom building next to the main administration building and replaced it with a new 2-storey permanent modular building. It is the home of 6 new learning spaces, a common area for students to gather, toilets and a lift.
Budget	Stage 1 - \$2.5M Stage 2 and 3 - \$7M
Status	Stage 1 - 2019 Stage 2 and 3 - 2021

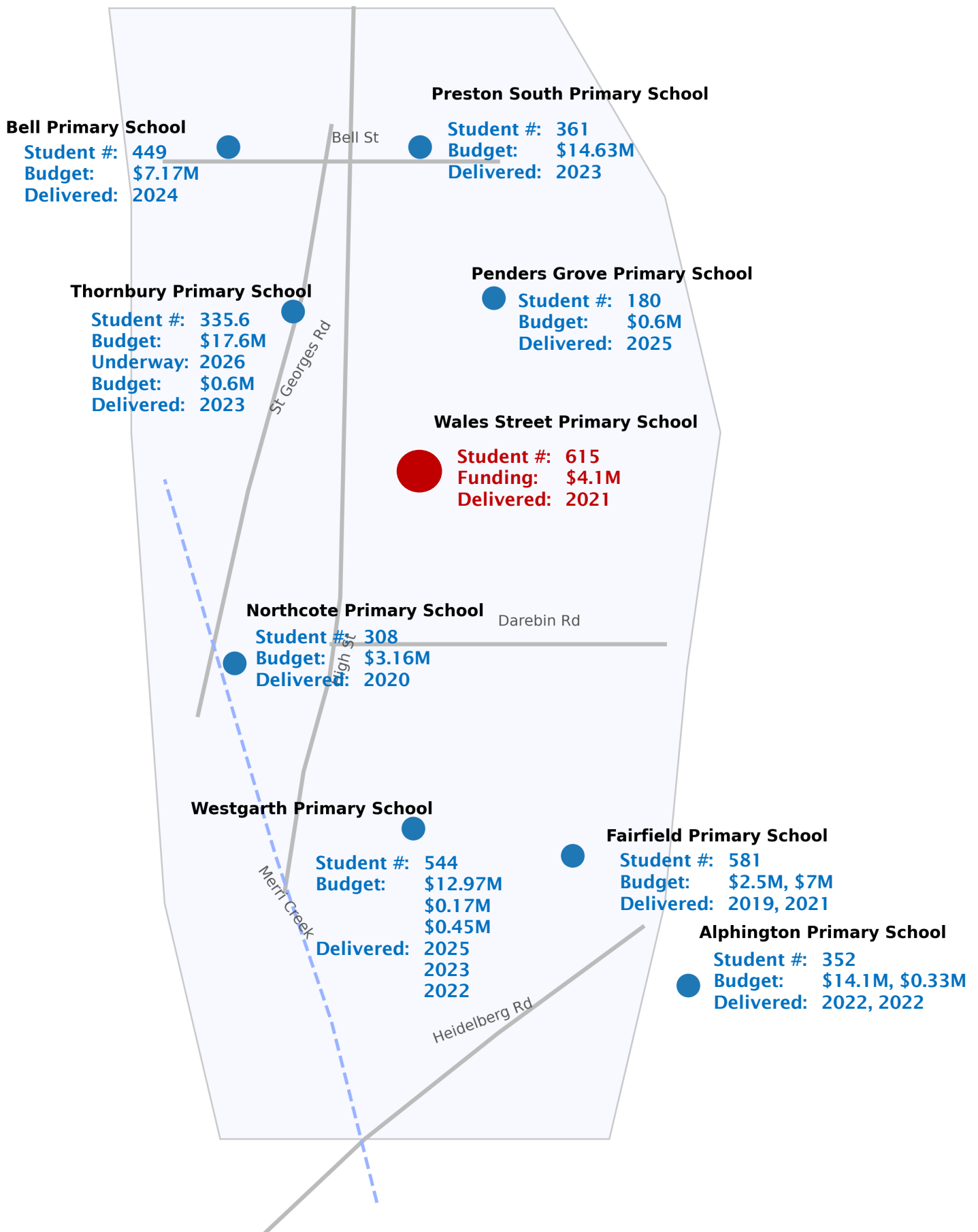
Alphington Primary School	
Student Enrolment	352
Investment	Stage 1 - delivered a competition-grade gymnasium, music room and a 3-level learning building. Refurbishment of the art room and classrooms in the heritage building, and landscaping works. Stage 2 – construction of a new 2-storey administration block, library and staff rooms. New roof
Budget	\$14.1M\$330K
Status	Delivered Stage 1 -2022 Delivered Stage 2 - 2022

Preston South Primary School	
Student Enrolment	361
Investment	New three-storey learning and administration building. The new building includes indoor and outdoor areas for general learning, specialist learning spaces for science and technology, staff and administration areas. New outdoor play areas and completed landscaping as part of this project.
Budget	\$14.63 M
Status	Delivered 2023

Thornbury Primary School	
Student Enrolment	335.6
Investment	Upgrade and modernisation - A new 2-storey community hub and Prep–Year 1 learning centre. Updates to the library and main building. New toilets and playground enhancement
Budget	\$17.6M \$600K
Status	Underway 2026 Delivered 2023

Westgarth Primary School	
Student Enrolment	544
Investment	Upgrade and modernisation A competition-grade gym and a new classroom building. The works included landscaping and an outdoor undercover area. Upgrades to the existing hall to provide new learning spaces. Demolished toilets and a storeroom to make way for a central landscaped area that included a new hardcourt. Inclusive learning space and new sheds and landscaping. New roof and stormwater improvements.
Budget	\$12.97M \$166K \$450K
Status	Delivered 2025 Delivered 2023 Delivered 2022

Victorian Government Investment in Northcote Electorate State Primary Schools



LETTER FROM WALES STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL – JUNIOR SCHOOL COUNCIL

**Ms Kat Theophanous MP, State Member for Northcote
Minister for Education, The Hon. Ben Carroll MP**

20 November 2025

Good morning Kat and Ben,

We are from the Junior School Council at Wales Street Primary School, and today we are here to talk to you about why our school really needs some important upgrades.

First of all, our **school hall is too small**. We have over 600 students, and we can't all fit inside for whole-school assemblies. When it rains, everything gets mixed up and we lose learning time. A bigger hall would let everyone come together in one place.

Next, our **basketball courts are not safe**. They are cracked, bumpy, and on a slope. The ball goes in the wrong direction, and people trip over and get hurt. A new indoor basketball court would be much safer and would let us play sport even on rainy days.

Another big problem is that **some buildings only have stairs and no lift**. If someone breaks their leg or uses crutches or a wheelchair, it is very hard for them to get to class. Everyone deserves to be able to learn easily and safely, and a lift would help make our school more fair and inclusive.

Our **classrooms are also getting overcrowded** because more students are coming to our school every year. When classrooms are too full, it is harder to concentrate and learn properly. Bigger classrooms would help everyone do their best.

All of these changes would not only help students and teachers, but also the **whole community**. Before and after school care, local sports teams, and community groups could use a new hall too.

Thank you very much for listening and for thinking about helping our school. We really hope you can support us in making Wales Street Primary School a safer, better, and more fun place to learn.

Thank you.

Wales Street Primary School Junior Council.

WALES STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENT SIGNATURES SUPPORTING LETTER FROM JUNIOR SCHOOL COUNCIL

On the following pages, you'll see more than **550 student signatures**, showing strong support for the Junior School Council's letter and how much we care about making our school better for everyone. This isn't just important to us – it matters to our whole school community.

All students agree that we need:

- **A bigger hall** so the entire school can come together for assemblies.
- **Safe basketball courts** so no one gets hurt.
- **Lifts in our buildings** so everyone can get to class easily.
- **Classrooms that aren't overcrowded**, so learning is comfortable and effective.

These changes would make Wales Street Primary School fairer, safer, and more fun for learning and playing. We hope you will listen to our voices and help us make our school the best it can be – not just for us, but for our whole community.



HELP OUR SCHOOL



W A R I R S

S E P R I M A R Y S

WE NEED UPGRADES Student

R E F E R E N C E S

SUMMARY OF WALES STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL 2025 FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE SURVEY

The Wales Street Primary School Facilities and Infrastructure Survey conducted in December 2025 reveals a **clear mandate** from the school community for urgent, government-funded upgrades to the school's buildings, learning spaces, gymnasium and basketball court area. Responses from sixty four (64) respondents demonstrate overwhelming agreement that current infrastructure is **not meeting the needs of students or staff**, and that improvements are essential to support teaching, learning, wellbeing, inclusion, and safety.

Critical Findings

- **Strong consensus on the need for upgrades**
89% of respondents agree that infrastructure improvements are necessary to enhance student learning outcomes.
- **Upgrades will have significant wellbeing and engagement impacts**
All respondents (100%) believe infrastructure investment would positively influence student wellbeing and engagement, highlighting the breadth of unmet needs.
- **Current facilities are inadequate for learning**
A majority (64%) believe current WSPS facilities do *not* adequately support effective teaching and learning, with only 17% expressing confidence in existing conditions.
- **There are concerns about injuries and safety**
58% of participants do *not* believe current facilities adequately ensure student safety or injury prevention — an urgent area for intervention (only 19% indicating confidence in existing conditions). A key area of concern is the basketball court area.
- **Strong expectations for accessibility and inclusion**
Nearly all respondents (95%) agree that all classrooms and facilities should be fully accessible, signalling a strong community value around inclusivity. This is not currently the case at Wales Street Primary School.

Infrastructure Priorities Identified

- **Gymnasium and multipurpose space**
97% believe WSPS needs a gymnasium capable of hosting whole-school assemblies, events, sport, and arts programs. This is one of the strongest single-priority items identified.
- **Classrooms upgrades to overcome overcrowding**
72% report that classrooms are overcrowded or undersized, directly affecting learning, wellbeing, and teachers' ability to deliver effective lessons.
- **Government responsibility and investment**
97% feel the Victorian Government should prioritise funding upgrades at WSPS, reflecting a shared view that the school has lagged behind comparable schools.

Community Readiness for Advocacy

- **High support for lobbying efforts**
98% support the school engaging local Members of Parliament to secure investment.
- **Strong willingness to participate**
70% of respondents are prepared to take part in advocacy actions such as petitions, fence signage, or meetings—evidence of a motivated and engaged community.

WALES STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL FACILITIES SURVEY:

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS



89%

Upgrades will improve student learning



100%

Upgrades will positively impact student wellbeing



97%

Need a gym that holds the entire school community



72%

Classrooms are overcrowded and small



58%

Concerns about safety and injuries



97%

Call for government investment

Survey Conclusion

The survey demonstrates **strong and consistent consensus** that Wales Street Primary School facilities are outdated, inadequate, and failing to meet contemporary educational, safety, accessibility, and wellbeing standards. There is overwhelming support for government-funded upgrades and clear community readiness to participate in strong advocacy efforts to secure investment from the Victorian Government.



Invest in Our Children's Future – Urgent Upgrades to Wales Street Primary School

Sign Petition

