

OUR HISTORY



Over the course of its 113 year history Applecross Primary School has continued to evolve as the demands of the local community have grown. A strong partnership between the school staff, parent body and broader Applecross community has ensured increased resources as they were required.

Before the School

In the year 1900 only a few people lived in the place known as Applecross. It was considered to be “out in the bush”. There were no roads – only bush tracks; there was no electricity and no piped water supply. Most of the houses were scattered along the edge of the river, quite close to the jetty. Families used candles and kerosene lamps for lighting, and cooking was done on wood stoves. The main source of warmth in winter was a log fire in the living room. Electricity did not come to Applecross until 1920. Water was gathered in tanks via run off from rooves with the sinking of wells becoming common in the search for fresh drinkable water. There was only one shop in Applecross at that time. It was situated at the bottom of Ardross Street, near the jetty.



On weekends and public holidays day-trippers would come on the ferries to the jetty to catch prawns, fish and crabs



The General Store, located at the bottom of Ardross Street was the only shop in Applecross in the early 1900s

The river and the jetty (built in 1885) were very important to the local community. Supplies for the residents would be delivered on the ferry and left in a large box at the end of the jetty. Because there was no postman mail too was deposited into the box. People would come to collect their supplies, often bringing along a cart or a wheelbarrow in which to take everything home.

A School for Applecross!



As the community grew parents began to think about the educational needs of their children. The nearest school was in Bicton 4 miles (6.4km) away. Too far for the younger children to walk and without suitable roads there were no cars or buses to take them. Consequently a group of parents were prompted to write to the Education Department to ask for a school to be established.

On January 26th, 1905, they sent an application form listing the names of 22 children aged between 5 and 16 years, who would attend the school.

In addition, they told the department that temporary accommodation for a school was available in the Melville Road Board Hall on Kintail Road. The hall was offered at a rent of ten shillings a month by the Board; and for one pound a week accommodation could be provided for a teacher. As a result of the application the District Inspector visited Applecross to meet with parents and to inspect the hall. The Inspector consequently recommended that the offer of the hall should be accepted, and a school opened as soon as a teacher could be found. Applecross was to have a school!

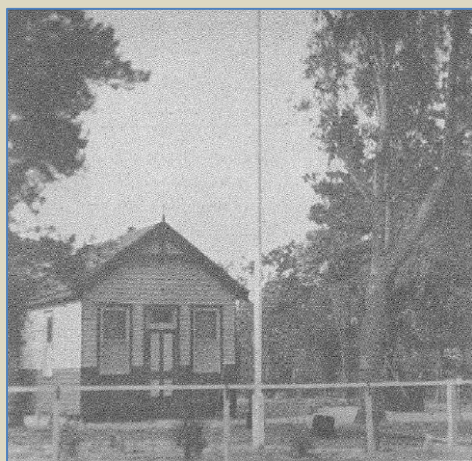
Dated, 26-1-1905.

PROPOSED SCHOOL, AT Applecross.

Parents Particulars required to be supplied.

Name of the Parent or Guardian (Or the name of the child)	Address of the Parent or Guardian	Age of Child	Sex	Religion
E. Gardiner	46	13	M	Anglican
		13	F	Anglican
		13	M	Anglican
		9	M	Anglican
		8	F	Anglican
		6	M	Anglican
		11	M	Anglican
		11	F	Anglican
		13	F	Anglican
		11	F	Anglican
		9	F	Anglican
		12	F	Anglican
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		7	M	Anglican
		7	M	Anglican
		9	M	Anglican
		11	M	Anglican
		8	M	Anglican
		10	M	Anglican

A COPY OF THE ORIGINAL APPLICATION FORM, DATED 26 JAN 1905



To make it suitable as a school, a number of additions were needed. Two latrines, a stove for heating and a water tank were added. In years to come the building was purchased by the RSL and serves as the Applecross Branch Headquarters to this day. The original building can be seen incorporated into the now RSL building (right)

In his report the Inspector indicated that the land for use as a future school site (lots 304-311) close to the hall was for sale. It was offered to the Department by the London and West Australian Investment Co. for between 120 and 130 pounds.

On April 5th, 1905 the first school in Applecross was opened in the Melville Road Board Hall. There were 22 children present and their teacher was Miss Flora O'Connor.

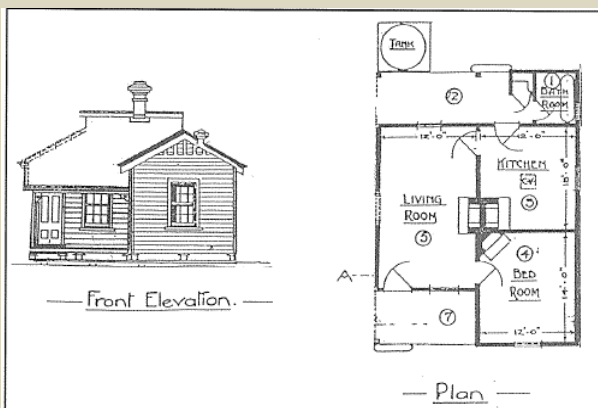


The first state school in Applecross with Miss Flora O'Connor – Headmistress and 16 of her pupils

The Fight Continues

In 1909, Miss Ella Flanagan took over from Miss O'Connor as headmistress. By this time the Melville Road Board Hall was in very poor condition; the door had fallen off many times and in the summer the room was unbearably hot. Despite protest by parents to the Education Department nothing was done, with the Department simply deferring responsibility for the building condition to the owner, the Roads Board. In November 1911, the Board wrote to the Department of Education and pointed out that the hall was not only crowded but more seriously the water supply was unfit for human consumption. Subsequently four days later Miss Flanagan reported that a number of the children had become ill after drinking water from the tank. Following this water incident the Department decided to look seriously into the issues that had been raised at Applecross School; and in due course set about locating a suitable block of land on which to build a new school. In February 1912 the Education Department wrote to the parents of Applecross School and indicated that they were in the process of purchasing a suitable block of land and once this process was completed steps would be taken to erecting a permanent school.

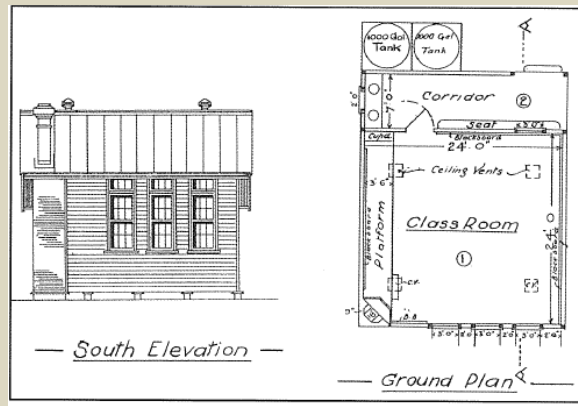
By the end of May 1913 a contract for the building of a school and teacher's quarters had been let. The completion date was given as September 3rd, 1913, and the contract price was set at 795pd 10s 6d. On the 4th September, 1913 Applecross State School, Class V11, was opened by the new head teacher, Mr John L. McDonald.



The teacher's quarters as they were designed in 1913



The teacher's quarters as they look today (2018)



The new school room as designed in 1913



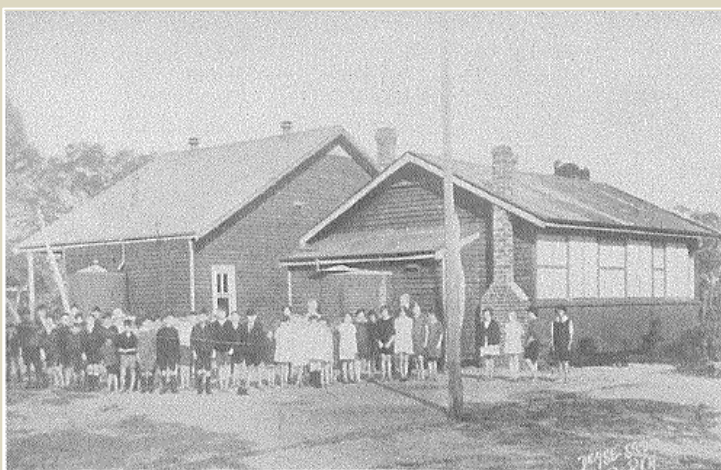
The original school room as it looks today (2018) both outside and inside

Sand was aplenty and Space at a Premium

The ensuing years saw Applecross School grow rapidly and by 1918 enrolments had risen to 57 in a school that was built to house 50 students. A bonus at that time was the school was now eligible for an extra teacher and consequently Miss Dorothy Branson was appointed to support the then head teacher Mr James Gill. Mr Gill set about gradually gravelling small areas of the school grounds (gravel was much cheaper than shell) to enable the students to play ball games or to practice drill – marching exercises.



APPLECROSS CHILDREN LINING UP ON THE SAND, 1920s



THE PAVILION CLASSROOM, 1920s
LEFT IN THE PICTURE: WOODEN SCHOOL (OLD SCHOOLROOM)

Mr Gill continued his efforts to have the school grounds improved. He also made a number of requests to the Education Department for improvements to be made to the school buildings, his quarters, and the problems he faced because of overcrowding. In desperation he suggested the living room of the teacher's quarters be used as a classroom. Unfortunately this was not agreed to by the Education Department. They did however arrange for a pavilion classroom to be built at the school. It was made of timber and had canvas sides and was completed by April 1919.

Electricity and Water

The possibility of having electricity connected to dwellings and community facilities in the Applecross area was offered in April 1920. A positive response from community members culminated in a community gathering around a transformer that had been installed near to the Applecross jetty; unfortunately when it came time to pull the lever to engage the network nothing happened so it was back to kerosene lamps for a little longer for the residents. Unfortunately the students of Applecross School had to wait another two years to have electricity connected to their classroom with its arrival in June of 1922.

During the hot season bushfires in the area of the school were common. In February of 1922 a very bad fire raged through the school grounds. Unfortunately there was never any spare water to use on fires; they had to be beaten out or left to burn out. In summer there was barely enough water for drinking.

Fortunately by the end of 1923 scheme water had reached Applecross and the head teacher, Mr Ewers, applied to have it connected to his quarters and the school. In February of 1924 the job was completed, and at long last Applecross School was assured of a regular water supply. There would be no more carting of water from the tanks located at the Melville Roads Board Hall by the boys, nor would the school's tanks run dry during the summer months and the frequency of illness from drinking water from nearly empty tanks was reduced dramatically.

The School Bell

In 1929, the P&C Association was responsible for having a bell-tower built at the school as part of Western Australia's centenary celebrations. The same bell-tower remains in the school grounds today although its location is compromised by the need for staff members to park their vehicles during the day and consequently finds itself in the middle of the staff carpark.



THE SCHOOL BELL - 1929 CEREMONY
(THE SMALL GATE TO THE LEFT OF THE PICTURE WAS THE SCHOOL ENTRANCE ON KINTAIL ROAD)

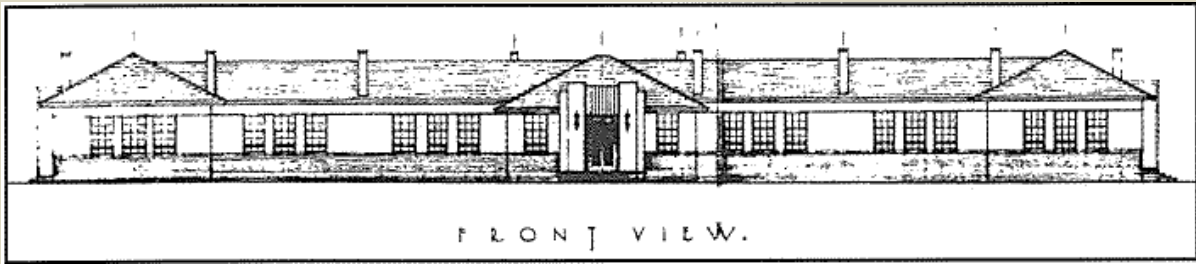


Overcrowding and a Lack of Classroom Space ...

By the end of 1935 there were 114 children enrolled and where to put them was becoming a very big problem. The school room and the pavilion room built in 1919 were the main classrooms at Applecross for many years. Unfortunately the pavilion room only had canvas sliding shutters on its sides, which when wet, made the room cold, damp and miserable.

At one stage the president of the P&C Association threatened to take his son away from the school in protest at the state of the room. A newspaper article published in the West Australian on September 19th, 1934 helped parents enormously in their efforts to have something done about the pavilion room. Shortly after the article appeared the arrangement was made to replace the canvas with much needed glass and asbestos.

This room is in fact what is currently known today as Room 14. Future planning below shows it has been incorporated into the main body of the school.



The first brick classroom is shown on the far right end of the future design



The original brick classroom as it looks today

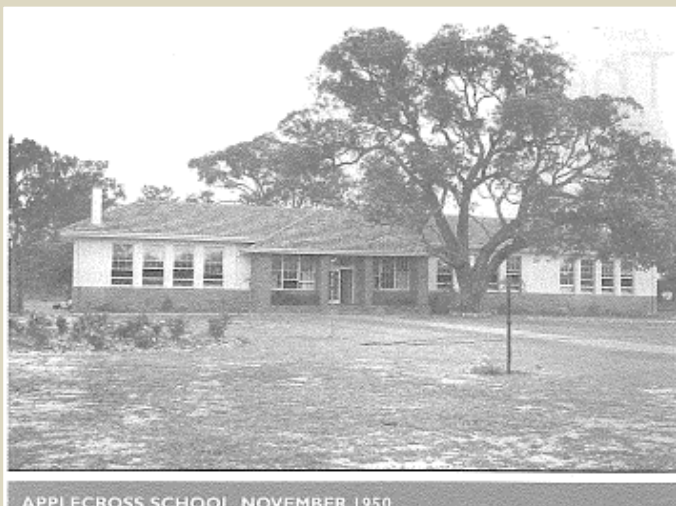
While the new brick building was still in the planning stage, it was decided that more land should be bought because the present school site was too small. Consequently all the blocks up to Sixth Avenue were purchased between 1944 and 1945. MacLennan Road, which extended from Kintail Road across where the oval now stands, to Kishorn Road, ceased to be a road and was subsumed within the school boundary for the purpose of playing fields.

The new school (classroom) was completed by July 1945. Within two years of completion, overcrowding again became a problem and this consequently prompted the planning of more classrooms.

The New Brick School

The construction of new classrooms began in January of 1948. Details of the extensive building program were reported in the October edition of the Applecross news.

It was during the building program that overcrowding at the school became so serious that arrangements were made to have a pavilion room from Rosalie School transported to Applecross and erected on the school grounds.



The new brick classrooms and school admiration area were completed in September 1949. Unfortunately this planning for the continual growth in student numbers did nothing to alleviate the accommodation problems and in March 1950 the P&C Association wrote to the Education Department and advised that additional rooms be built in anticipation of an expected high enrolment for 1951. Consequently plans for three new classrooms (and a hat room) were drawn up and just over a year later, April 1951, work began on the new classrooms. In June of 1952 a ceremony was held to open the new wing of the school.

Shortly after the classrooms were completed, the P&C Association made arrangements to have sections of the school grounds cleared for a playground. In writing to the Education Department they were concerned that the half acre area at the front of the school which had been grassed was simply for “show” and they required the children to have a space that they could run on and play various sports. In 1953 a very ambitious project to develop a school oval was started. With help from the Road Board and the Department of Agriculture a school oval was developed and grassed. Arrangements were also made to have a turf cricket wicket laid out of a desire to have the students develop cricketing skills. More importantly they had a desire for students to develop high standards of conduct, tolerance and fair play both in the classroom and on the sporting field. In September of 1955 the new oval was completed and given the name “Coronation Oval”. An official opening was held on the school’s annual faction sports day.



Today the children at Applecross enjoy a large grassed and reticulated oval where they can play a range of sports as well as general physical education activities where they develop and refine their gross and fine motor skills (The original turf wicket is still evident today and is well used during the summer months).

The Trees

It is no coincidence that the current grounds of Applecross School contain a varied collection of magnificent mature trees. The school’s new headmaster in 1949 was Mr C.W. Harris. Mr Harris was very interested in developing the school gardens and he set about planning and organising the layout of trees, shrubs and lawned areas. Many of the large shade trees that were planted in the grounds in 1949 are still there today.



The tradition of planting and caring for trees and the environment has been carried on by generations of Applecross children. Today the students are very active in the area of environmental sustainability. Revegetation, recycling, animal husbandry and vegetable production are ongoing activities from year to year.



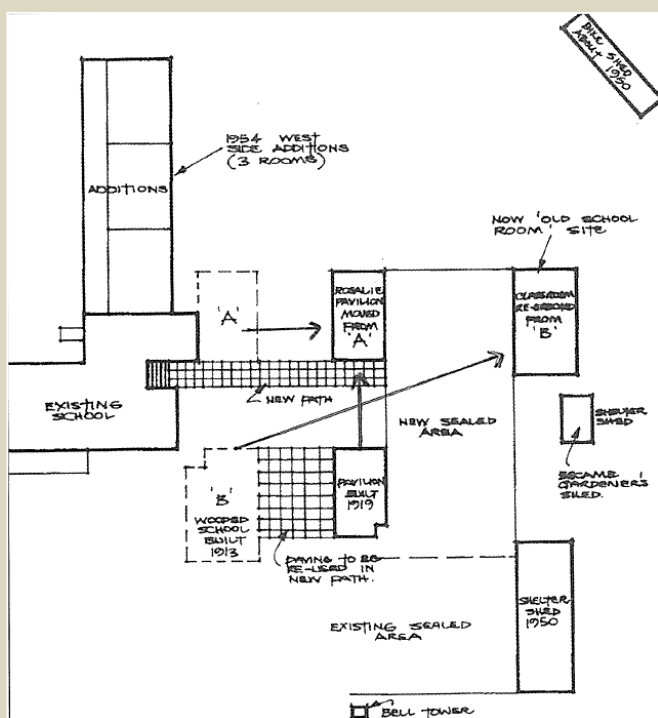
Vegetable gardening, paper recycling and tree planting are a regular part of school life at Applecross today

A Flurry of Building During the 1950s

Between 1953 and 1958, enrolments at the school were so high (by November 1959 there were 836 children attending Applecross School) that classes were held in the staffroom, the washroom and the two local halls. A number of classrooms were added during this time with the last two (Rooms 6&7) finished in 1959. In addition to these new buildings the original wooden rooms needed to be moved to make way for more modern brick additions.

The wooden pavilion transported from Rosalie Primary School (named the Rosalie Pavilion) in 1948 to alleviate the overcrowding was moved some 15 metres to the west and joined to the original canvas sided pavilion built in 1919 which was moved some 10 metres south. The resulting building is today known as the "Rosalie Pavilion" and serves as our Science/Technology centre as well as providing office space for the school's support staff.

The original wooden school classroom built in 1913 was moved about 50 metres to the south west to ensure space for entry and exit to the new brick buildings. "The Old Classroom" remains in situ today and is a fully functioning classroom from that era.



Plans of the relocation of the older style classrooms before the new brick extensions were completed

The Rosalie Pavilion and the old pavilion room were eventually moved and placed together to become one room. Today they serve as our Science/IT centre and office facilities for support staff

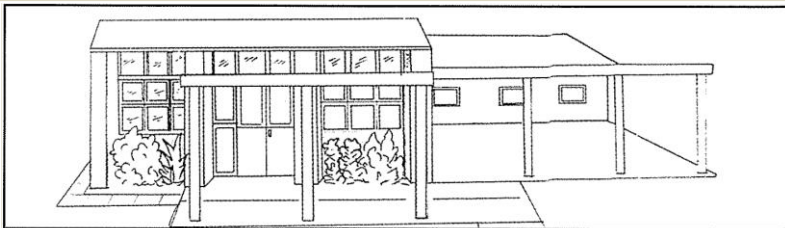


The highest enrolment figure ever recorded at Applecross was 842 in October, 1962. As the suburb of Applecross has “matured”, enrolments have gradually fallen and the present accommodation, although at its maximum, is sufficient for the requirements of contemporary education. At the end of 1987, there were 340 children at the school however this has gradually grown to around 570 in 2018.

A Library and Canteen and Music Room and Library/Resource Area and Art Room

The buildings on the southern side of the school have been subject to addition and extension since they were first established in 1966. This area, which now serves as the school’s music, art, library and teachers’ resource centre, has had a number of iterations since its original configuration.

A library and canteen block was built in 1966, which had the distinction of being the first library building in a primary school in the Melville district. Today the library and canteen are no longer next to each other.



THE LIBRARY AND CANTEEN BLOCK

The design of the original library and canteen block

The building after its completion



The 1980s saw another period of construction at Applecross Primary as changing educational practises required specialist learning areas and greater space for learning activities. Work began in September 1980 to remove internal walls along the East Wing to make a library (current Room 11) while the original built in 1966, was converted into a classroom. Modifications were also made to the administration and staffroom areas and an art and craft room was completed. Later that year the P&C Association erected a reading court and performing arts area in the grounds on the north eastern end of the main building. This space was well chosen as it was adjacent to the then library and between mature shay trees. This facility is still used today.



Although there were new additions and alterations during this period, there remained a lack of suitable space for specialists to work outside of the classroom. Consequently, the side room of the old teacher's quarters were once again used as a teaching space and at one point during the 1990s it became a fully operational classroom. At the same time even the large shelter shed built in the 1950s was cleared of stored items, carpeted, sky-lit and fluoro-tubed and resurrected for a second time.



THE SHELTER SHED PUT TO USE AGAIN IN THE EARLY 1990s

Today the shelter shed serves as a storage space for classroom furniture, gardening equipment and archive storage space for the P&C Association.

An Undercover Area

Early in 1990 the P&C Association was particularly active in campaigning for a covered assembly area so that adequate protection could be provided during school assemblies. A covered assembly area was eventually built in 1994 at the southern end of the east wing, roofed and enclosed on three sides. It was a very big improvement from conducting assemblies in the open quadrangle. Just four years later the undercover area was enclosed with red brick, glass and roller doors. It serves well as a performing area for students, a place to hold physical education lessons during inclement weather, as an assembly area and an area to hold special school events like Year 6 graduations and art exhibitions.



The covered assembly area in 1994



As it looks today (2018)



A musical performance in the undercover area by students in Years 5 and 6 who participate in the school instrumental music program

Making Way for Pre Primary Students

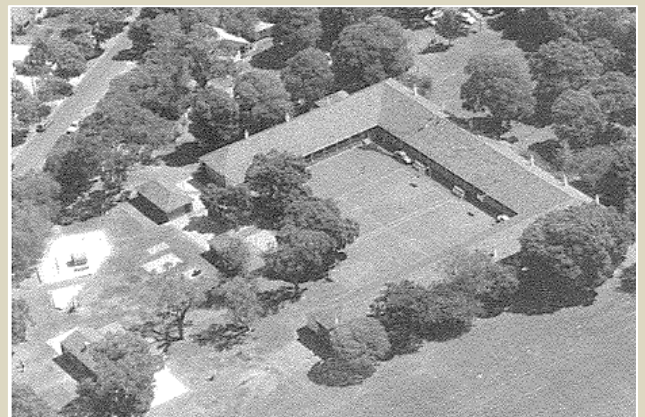
In 1997 pre primary students were incorporated onto primary school sites. This meant the relocation of Applecross Pre Primary students from their long established dwellings in Tain Street to a transportable centre located on the grounds of Applecross Primary. Although a purpose built centre is in effect a “transportable” building located on the south west corner of the school grounds.



With an enclosed play area and purpose built interior the centre became home for Applecross pre primary students. Today it remains relatively the same facility although it now accommodates Year 2 students.

Applecross Primary School has continued to grow and morph since its humble beginnings in the Melville Roads Board Hall in Kintail Road. The decision in 1999 to construct a new library/resource centre, a new canteen, music room, art room and clothing store would change the facilities considerably.

This photo is an aerial view taken from the south east in 1993 prior to any significant building projects at the southern end of the main school area.



The more recent photo below, taken in 2018, depicts a significantly different area to the south. From left to right you can see the pre primary centre (silver roof) built in 1997, the library- art-music centre, the enclosed undercover area and the latest addition of an early childhood learning centre.



This photo, left (Library/Canteen), is taken from the eastern end of what is today the canteen but was the boy's toilet block. The clear, open grassed area has today been replaced with an extensive covered play area (photo right) for Years 1 & 2 students



The library art music centre as it looks today. The lower pitched roof on the end of the building is the original library built in 1966.

The final piece of the puzzle to date was the building of an Early Learning Centre



This wonderful facility was built as a result of the federal government's economic stimulus package and opened in December 2011. It provides two purpose built kindergarten rooms and three purpose built pre primary rooms



The play area is designed specifically to allow the children to interact when they play as well as to challenge their fine and gross motor skills

Today, even though on the surface the buildings look old in nature, within the walls of the teaching spaces are modern teaching resources with up to date technology. Professional staff continually revise and adjust their pedagogy to suit the learning styles of an ever increasingly diverse student population.



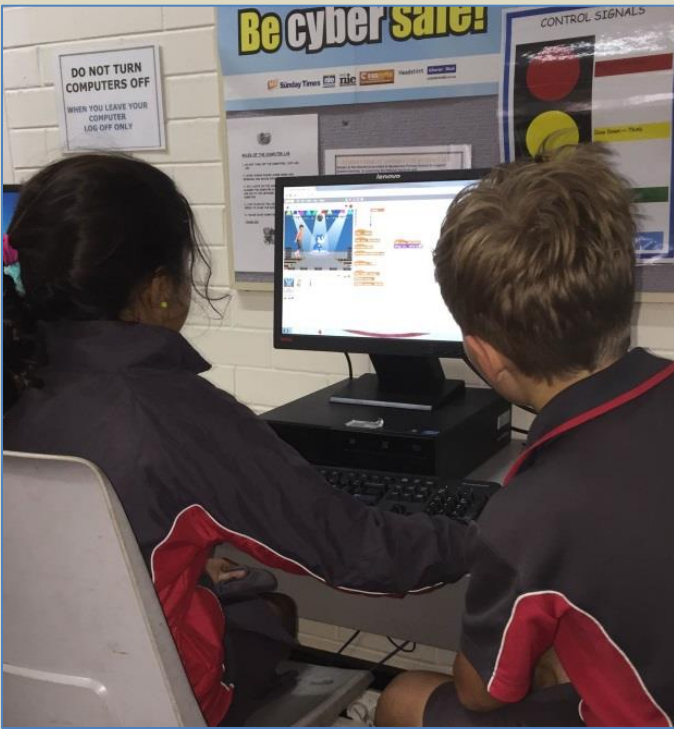
All children enjoy physical activities on the extensive school oval planned and developed by the P&C Association in 1953



The original library built alongside a canteen in 1966 has become our music room where the children enjoy participating in an extensive range of musical activities from singing and dancing to learning one of the many musical instruments available



An art room built alongside the music room in the place of the original canteen allows the children to enjoy a wide variety of experiences in the many mediums that are represented in this curriculum area



As the digital world has become a normal part of our lives we have incorporated programming into the routine of the educational experiences of the children at Applecross Primary school



“Scratch” is a popular way of introducing young students to the concept of programming



Modern phenomenon such as drones has become a reality in our lives. Students at Applecross are offered the opportunity to understand the possibilities of this type of aircraft, the science of aeronautics and the far reaching possibilities of such objects in our modern everyday lives



The original buildings have been used on numerous occasions for a variety of educational purposes. Here students from our Gifted and Talented Program present their research in what was the original teacher accommodation in 1913. Today this building is affectionately known as the "Old Principal's House"



The pavilion classroom built in 1919 to overcome a shortage of student accommodation today serves as our Science/Technology centre



The school grounds have been developed extensively since the Headmaster of 1918, Mr James Gill, set about planning and developing suitable areas within the grounds for the students to enjoy educational and recreational activities.



What started out as an isolated “out in the bush” location accessible only by boat in 1900 has become a sought after riverside suburb. Applecross is a flourishing primary school providing outstanding educational experiences for the students and their families who come to live here from all over the world.

* *Historical information contained within this information document has been taken from the publication “Applecross Primary School, The First Hundred Years.”*