

## Bell Park North Primary School

Bell Park North Primary School is situated in the northern suburb of Geelong, it was established in 1968. The catchment area for the school has a large number of people from a variety of non-English speaking backgrounds. The district, which contains a long established residential area and a new housing estate, would be classified as working-class.

In 1999, the student population of Bell Park North Primary School was approximately 250. Nearly 50% of these students come from non-English speaking backgrounds and the majority of these come from homes where Croatian is spoken.

In 1986 the school community considered offering a language other than English. After wide community consultation, it was decided to offer Croatian. In 1987 the school commenced a Croatian mother-tongue maintenance and development program. In 1990, Bell Park North Primary School began to offer two Croatian programs, one for background speakers and one for second language learners.

Croatian was introduced into the school to meet both the needs of the Croatian-speaking community and those of second language learners whose neighbours and friends are Croatian speaking.

Program: LOTE CROATIAN

### 1. PURPOSE

1.1 To maintain and develop the Croatian Language of those children whose home language is not English.

1.2 To provide all children with the opportunity to learn a 2nd language and to enable speakers of English to gain some proficiency in speaking a LOTE.

### 2. GUIDELINES

2.1 To give access to Mother Tongue development for those children whose home language is not English.

2.2 To develop communication skills in Croatian.

2.3 To increase children's understanding of their ethnic heritage.

2.4 To enhance children's self esteem and ethnic identity.

2.5 To develop an appreciation and tolerance of other cultures and languages.

2.6 To develop a positive outlook on language learning.

2.7 To develop oral fluency and understanding.

2.8 To make language learning an experience as enjoyable as possible.

2.9 To incorporate the Community Language Program into the Total School.

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 The aims of the program are organised mainly through themes covering all curriculum areas. However, incidental learning may come through activities and experiences at any time. The oral language approach is mainly implemented with an emphasis placed on providing hands on and real life experiences. Constant revision and reinforcement of common language needs are used to develop and maintain oral language.

3.2 Communication with classroom teachers helps to establish themes, so that the program can be seen as a part of a total educational program.

3.3 The aims are implemented through:

- Oral language so children can express themselves fully in the form of games, role play, cooking, sport, art work, songs and rhymes.
- Questioning and retelling to develop comprehension.
- Exposure to different forms of literature.
- Reading and writing skills so children can explore different forms of language.
- MT and 2nd Language children learning and helping one another.