

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP

Minister for Education

Minister for Women



Tuesday, 31 January 2023

NEW SCHOOLS FOR MELBOURNE'S GROWING NORTH

More than one million Victorian students head back to school this week, with families in Melbourne's growing northern suburbs benefitting from five of 12 new schools opening for Term 1.

Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins officially opened the first stages of Wollert Secondary College and Mickleham Secondary College and welcomed the schools' first students.

Wollert Secondary College has space for 700 students, including 50 spaces for young people with disabilities and additional needs. The school's first stage includes a new gymnasium and performing arts spaces, and will accommodate 1,300 students, including 100 with specialist needs once all stages are complete.

Mickleham Secondary College's first stage includes space for 800 students, science and technology buildings, a community hub and a competition grade basketball and netball court. Once complete, it will accommodate 1,200 students.

Donnybrook Primary School, Wayi School in Craigieburn and Barrawang Primary School in Wollert will also open to students for Term 1.

The other new schools are in Melbourne's growing west and south-eastern suburbs and include: Ngarri Primary School, Thornhill Park Primary School, Lollypop Creek Primary School, Karwan Primary School, Nearnung Primary School, Kurrun Primary School and Quarters Primary School.

All new primary schools will have a kindergarten on-site or next door, allowing children to make a smooth transition from pre-school and helping parents ditch the dreaded double drop-off.

Seven of the primary schools will have kindergartens operating on-site or next door from 2023, with the remaining three kindergartens opening next year.

Students from 1,566 government, 499 Catholic and 230 independent schools start their studies in every corner of Victoria this week. More than 77,000 students will start secondary school, with a similar number set to begin their formal education journey in Prep.

Each Prep student at a government school will receive a free Prep bag with books like *The Two-Hearted Numbat* by Ambelin and Ezekiel Kwaymullina, a brother and sister team of Indigenous writers, a Meet the Mathscots ruler, a world map jigsaw, SunSmart stickers and a Get Your Move On frisbee.

Since 2014, the Labor Government has invested \$12.8 billion in building new schools and more than 1,850 school upgrades, creating around 17,400 jobs. The Government is ahead of schedule in opening 100 new schools by 2026, with 75 new schools opening between 2019 and 2024 – ensuring every student can access a great local school.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins

"I'd like to wish every student returning to school this week the best of luck in the coming year – it's an exciting time filled with new friends, learning and experiences that shape you forever."

Media contact: Sarah Vanin 0410 982 745 | sarah.vanin@minstaff.vic.gov.au

“More students than ever have the facilities and first-class education they deserve, thanks to the Labor Government’s record investment in school infrastructure and support for teachers – ensuring Victoria remains the education state.”

Quotes attributable to Member for Thomastown Bronwyn Halfpenny

“It is so exciting to see we are building amazing schools with the modern facilities our children deserve. These impressive facilities will be shared with residents as well.”

Quote attributable to Member for Kalkallo Ros Spence

“We’re making sure that all students in Melbourne’s growing northern suburbs have the best spaces to learn and every child is given an opportunity to succeed.”