



Jim Hill
Principal



History of Employment - As a teacher I taught in the North East of Victoria. In 2000 I became a Principal near Wangaratta. I then moved to Mildura for five years before Melbourne in 2008. I loved working in small rural schools and was a shared Physical Education specialist when I taught at nine small schools. One of my schools was Falls Creek which I visited once a fortnight. I have also taught in England twice and Germany at the International School of Hamburg. When teaching overseas it was as an International Teaching Fellow, part of the Victorian and Commonwealth Exchange Teachers program.

Skills and Achievements - Prior to studying teaching I went to the Centre for Performing Arts in Adelaide for two years, this was never going to be a career but I had an amazing time. I then completed an Arts Degree followed by a Diploma and Bachelor of Education. I have also completed a Graduate Diploma in Computers in Education and a Graduate Diploma in Health and Welfare issues in Education. I have also completed a Masters Degree in Educational Leadership and my final study was to gain accreditation as an accredited International Growth Coach which I achieved last year after two years of study. Obviously I enjoy learning and can say I am a life long learning.

Who was your favourite teacher at school and why? - I had many great teachers. My favourite teacher at school was Mr. Herr. He was my Physical Education teacher at high school. He was also my first basketball coach when I played in under 12's. I later played in the same team as him. When I go home to Adelaide I often catch up with him and love our conversations. **I have learned a lot from him about school, education, sport and life.**

When not at school I like to.....When not at school I enjoy travelling having been to many countries. I like challenges such as walking the Milford track in New Zealand, walking the Coast to Coast in England, riding a bike from Prague to Hamburg! I recently started planning the 800 kilometre Camino/Santiago walk in France/Spain. I have done part of the walk but need to do the entire distance! I also have a group of cycling buddies who I ride with regularly and I love live theatre!

If I wasn't a teacher I would like to be...If I wasn't a teacher/principal my dream job would be to manage a horse agistment property. I learned to ride at a young age and grew up with horses and have continued riding for most of my life. There is nothing better than riding a horse through the bush on a cold rainy morning! That said, I really can't imagine a better job than teaching.

What makes Doncaster a great school to work at.....Do I really have to answer this question? Come and visit, you will understand!



Carly Epskamp
Assistant Principal



What makes Doncaster Primary School a great school to work at?

I love being part of the DPS community. All of the staff are very friendly, we work really well together, and we love to have a laugh together. The students at DPS are great. They are full of personality, yet well behaved, engaged and they love to learn. They are the best part of our job! The bonds I've created with families in the time I've been at DPS have been very special and I love checking in and seeing how families are going as time goes by, kids grow up and they move from Primary School to High School. Nothing beats seeing a student you taught years and years ago and now they're in High School achieving all the things you knew they would. It does make you feel old though! Proud, but old!

History of Employment:

Before I became a teacher I worked at a Video Store and a Kids Play Centre and both jobs were so much fun. I have been teaching for over 20 years and I have worked in two schools. I worked at my previous school for 15 years and I starting working at DPS in 2018. When I arrived at DPS I was a Level Two teacher and I loved that role. This is my third year as the Assistant Principal at Doncaster Primary School and I absolutely love what I do each and every day.

When not at school I like to.....

spend time outside at the park with my French Bulldog Saint. He loves chasing the ball and playing at the park. In Summer, I love going to the beach and spending the day there. I love travelling and I also like going out for dinner with my family and spending time with my friends. I love shopping, going to the movies and going to the footy to watch St.Kilda play.

If I wasn't a teacher I would like to be

When I was younger I always wanted to be a teacher. I was also interested in hairdressing and I thought being a lawyer would be pretty good too. If I wasn't a teacher/ assistant principal I think I would like to be an interior designer as I love decorating, furniture and homewares. I like photography and baking cakes too, but they are more hobbies.



Niky Corifios
Grade 6

Learning Specialist



My history of employment - My teaching career began in South Africa where I taught for 12 years at the primary school that I attended at as a student. I was honoured to teach alongside my favourite teacher of all times, my year 6 teacher. She was my hero as a student and the greatest mentor as a teacher. My next teaching journey was in Brisbane where I taught for 5 years. Finally, I landed in Melbourne where I have been fortunate to teach for 17 years and counting.

My Family and other Interest - Immigrating to Australia with my family; husband, daughter and son has been one the best decisions and highlights of my life. We enjoy spending time together at home, walking around the beautiful parks in our area and love eating out at all our fine restaurants in Melbourne. To keep fit and improve my physical and mental wellbeing, I often do low impact Pilates workouts. A great way to reboot!! My husband and I also enjoy going to the movies, preferably gold class 😊, and to the theatre. As a family, we also love travelling around the world and have visited many incredible countries, our favourites being Greece, France, Italy and South Africa.

If I wasn't a teacher - I would like to be a world traveller. Firstly, visiting countries, exploring different parts of the world in their summer months so to never feel any cold breeze ever again! I would also love to live and experience new cultures and meet new people. Most importantly, eating new foods in different countries is a great way to experience cultures and expand my palate!

What I like about Doncaster Primary and why it is a great school to work at - After teaching for so many years I feel extremely privileged to be teaching at Doncaster Primary. The main reason I chose DPS is that it has an excellent reputation for the quality of its teachers and the high calibre of its students. The teachers have a repertoire of knowledge, skills and insights and this leads to our students being passionate and avid learners.

What I love most about DPS - is the strong inclusive and caring setting we foster for all our community; students, parents, carers. The staff are a committed team to help provide a supportive and learning environment so that every DPS student can achieve greatness, academically and emotionally.

DETERMINATION PRIDE SUCCESS



Natalie Pike
Business Manager



History of employment? (where have you worked)

My first job was at KFC. I have worked as a medical receptionist then I started in schools in 2007 at Norwood Secondary College, then at Croydon Primary School, but I have loved working for 3 years at DPS as Business Manager.

Skills and Achievements.....

Forty years ago, I did a course in lead lighting and 5 years ago, I started creating leadlight glass and wood slab art pieces, which I really enjoy doing.

When not at school I like to.....

I love to bushwalk exploring our beautiful state forest tracks, boating, fishing, walk my greyhound Penny and I recently became a 'Nanna Nat' to my first grandchild Henry, who I adore!



Rebecca Rolfe
Office Manager



History of Employment - I have worked in education for over 25 years. I started as an education support worker at Eltham and Warrandyte Kindergartens before starting at Doncaster Primary School. I worked as an ES for about 15 years before moving into the office.

When not at school I like to spend time with my family. We enjoy going on long walks, visiting waterfalls, going to the beach and exploring country Victoria.

What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at - DPS is an amazing school to work at. I have worked here for over 25 years and have seen many changes from the buildings and grounds to teachers and students. Each year is different, but the same caring and supportive feel remains.

If I wasn't working at Doncaster Primary School..... I would like to be an artist. I enjoy being creative and designing. I would either like paint, draw, or even do some photography.



Diane Meilak
Prep Teacher



History of employment - I started teaching at Doncaster Primary School in 2009 as a graduate teacher. I had a couple of years off to have a family and returned part time whilst my kids were little. Last year I resumed full time when my son was school age. DPS holds a special place in my heart as my mum attended this school.

What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at - The staff are all really friendly and the students are a delight to teach! We have beautiful grounds and nice buildings. Our school also offers a range of engaging programs which makes it a fun place to teach.

What are your career highlights to date? - Being a team leader to the Prep team and building on my leadership skills. Also, being a role model and mentor to other staff members. Seeing student growth and achievements is always a career highlight as you open doors for many students along the way.



Jessica White
Prep Teacher



History of employment - I have been at Doncaster Primary School since 2019. I started doing CRT work at the school for half a year, then was offered a position in 2020 for my own classroom in Level Three, I then taught in Level One for a few years and now I teach Prep.

What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at - Doncaster is a great school to work at because of the people. Everyone is so lovely and genuinely care about each other and the students.

What are your career highlights to date - Not sure if this is a highlight, but Remote Learning was definitely something that will stand out to me for the rest of my career. It was a challenging time, but I think it brought the DPS community closer together.



Lillie Powell
Prep Teacher



What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at?

Doncaster Primary School is a great school because of all the wonderful teachers, students and parents. We have beautiful school grounds and can always make learning fun!

Who was your favourite teacher at school and why?

My favourite teacher was my Italian teacher, Signora Gigliotti because I loved learning a new language and once a year we got to eat rainbow gelato.

When not at school..... I like to go out for dinner at fancy restaurants.

If I wasn't a teacher..... I would like to be a florist and a Pilates instructor.



Brent Granger
Grade 1



What do you like about Doncaster Primary?

The staff at D.P.S encourage and support students to aim high and achieve their personal best. Students are always placed at the centre of every decision made. Wellbeing is a high priority at that school with different programs running from Prep to year Six that aim to develop students social and emotional skills.

What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at?

D.P.S. is an amazing place to work. The school has modern facilities, wonderful staff and dedicated students. The teachers work collaboratively to create and implement engaging learning programs that allow all students to achieve success. All staff share their knowledge and expertise and learn from and with one another.

When not at school I like to.....

When not at school I like to spend time reading books by my favourite authors. I enjoy travelling and learning about different parts of the world. I also like to keep active by walking each day.

What is your career highlights to date?

There have been many highlights over the years. I have coordinated different year levels and led teams across the school. I have undertaken a range of professional development and seen the positive impact that this has had on student outcomes. I am currently the Junior School Numeracy Learning Specialist.



Mei Sng
Grade 1



If I wasn't a teacher I would like to be.....

An astronaut! It would be an incredible experience to travel and explore space.

When not at school I like to.....

Drink tea, read fantasy novels and travel to places around the world.

What do you like about Doncaster Primary?

I enjoy the inclusiveness and diversity at Doncaster Primary. Everyone is made to feel welcome at the school and it is easy to make friends.

What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at?

The environment at Doncaster is wonderful! There is beautiful trees, plants and flowers in each corner of the school and it is pleasure to walk outside.



Courtney Larsen
Grade 1



What are your career highlights to date - The best part about my career would be the connections I have made with all of my students. Each year the classes are so different, and I have loved every relationship I have had with all of them.

When not at school I like to spend my time with my family. I have 3 sisters, 2 nieces, 2 nephews and one baby niece or nephew on the way! We are very close so we love to spend our time altogether.

If I wasn't a teacher - I would like to be a midwife delivering babies or a dog groomer. Working with either two of my favourite things, babies and dogs!



Madison Francis
Grade 2



Hi! My name is Miss Francis and this is my first year teaching at Doncaster Primary School.

I moved to Melbourne from Canada about a year and a half ago. Back in Canada, I have my family who live in British Columbia.

I grew up loving to be outdoors; lots of hiking, swimming, skiing and playing sports. I am looking forward to being active in our Doncaster Primary School Community this year!



Lauren Majoor
Grade 2



History of employment.

I have worked at a country primary school in Wodonga (on the border of Victoria and New South Wales) and here, at Doncaster Primary School! Two very different schools but I have loved working at them both equally!

The best part about Doncaster Primary School are the dedicated teachers and friendly students!

When not at school I like to..... Go running, play netball and spend time with my family.

My family are my beautiful 6 month puppy Arthur, he is very spoiled!



Hannah Stagoll
Grade 2



History of employment?

I have been a primary school teacher for 10 years. Before I became a teacher, I had a career in the Banking and Finance sector.

What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at?

Doncaster Primary School is a wonderful place to work. The student, staff and parent community make this school a warm and welcoming environment that I look forward to coming to each day.

What are your career highlights to date?

My career highlight is the day I decided to embrace a new career and become a primary school teacher.

When not at school I like to....

When not at school I like to enjoy many outdoor activities including hiking different great walks around Australia. I also enjoy some quiet time with a good book.



Julia Bay
Grade 3



What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at?

Doncaster Primary School is a great school to work at because the staff and students are wonderful. The students are polite, caring and eager to learn. The staff are friendly, collaborative and always supportive.

Who was your favourite teacher at school and why?

My favourite teacher when I was at school was my Grade 3 teacher, Mrs Appleby. She was kind, funny and supportive. She always listened to the students, and she used to sing songs with us all the time.

When not at school I like to....

When I am not at school I like to run, read, spend time in the garden, take my dog to the park and go hiking. I enjoy doing anything outside.

If I wasn't a teacher, I would like to be

If I wasn't a teacher, I would like to be a florist, gardener or maybe a park ranger. I love spending time in nature so I think these would be great jobs for me.



Priscilla Gale
Grade 3



History of employment? (where have you worked)

My first job was as a swimming teacher over the summer holidays while I studied at university. I worked as a Welfare Worker in a Community Health Service, a family worker, at a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, and as a community co-ordinator at a local council before becoming a teacher. (That makes me feel very old!!)

What do you like about Doncaster Primary?

The students are amazing - they are kind, friendly, polite and motivated. I love the multicultural community at the school, and the teachers are supportive. It's a caring community that's great to be part of.

Who was your favourite teacher at school and why?

My favourite teacher at primary school was Mrs. Solly. She was funny, fair and I always felt I was important to her.

When not at school I like toread, walk my beagle Emma, go to the movies, cook, care for my pot plants and go to the op shop.



Sarah Pike
Grade 3



History of employment? (where have you worked)

I have been a teacher for 3 years now. I have previously worked as a CRT, a numeracy tutor, and a Grade 5/6 teacher before working at Doncaster Primary School. I'm very excited to be a part of the Level 3 team this year at DPS!

What do you like about Doncaster Primary?

I absolutely love the culture of DPS and how the school approaches their learning. The students and staff are all so positive and welcoming of each other and it's great to be a part of.

When not at school I like to.....

When not at school I like to stay active and explore the environment by going on hikes and walks, going to Zumba and the gym. I also play guitar in my spare time, and like going to see live music as often as I can. I recently got into painting as well, and I'm working on a few different pieces currently.



Joy Lai
Grade 3



I am part of a family of four and my younger brother is 6 years old (Grade 1 this year!). I also recently got engaged to my partner of 5 years.

My favourite teacher.

My favourite teacher at school was one of my English teachers in high school. She taught me for four out of six years, showing commendable patience and support for my studies, given my busy training and travelling schedule due to sport.

When not at school, I like to..... build LEGO sets and paint. If I wasn't a teacher, I would like to be a professional chocolate taster.



Kelly Soccio
Grade 4



History of employment?

I've worked at DPS since 2006. In those 17 years I have spent some time away raising my family (I have 3 children). But it's never been too long before I'd return in some sort of part-time role, whether it be as a science teacher, Literacy intervention or classroom teacher. Last year I returned to DPS in a full-time capacity, which I have thoroughly enjoyed.

What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at?

All of the students, fellow staff and the community, are what makes DPS such a great school. I absolutely love coming to work each day to spend time with my students and colleagues. It's the wonderful relationships we form, the fun we have, and the things we learn and achieve together that make it so worthwhile.

What are your career highlights to date?

There are so many wonderful memories I have and highlights so far, that it is hard to think of a single one. I am always reminded of how quickly time passes when the students I once knew to be in Prep are suddenly celebrating their Level 6 graduation. It's such a wonderful celebration and I feel grateful to have witnessed so many students' growth over the years. I especially love it when former DPS students come back as secondary school students and even young adults to say hi and let me know what they're up to.

When not at school I like to...

Spend time with my family. We enjoy going for long walks or bike rides all together. I also love spending time with my friends, cooking and finding a nice quiet place to sit and read a good book.

If I wasn't a teacher, I would like to be...

An actress! Any student I've taught knows that I have a strong love of drama and can sometimes even be a bit dramatic. Before having children, I often performed in amateur theatre productions. I loved the freedom of pretending to be someone completely different to myself.



Angie Kotsiopoulos
Grade 4



What do you like about Doncaster Primary?

The thing I love most about our school is the large variation of culturally diverse families which we are lucky to work closely with at our school. It allows us to be in tune and familiar with various aspects of their world.

What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at?

Doncaster Primary is that everyone here is like a big family. I trust the staff and have a large community of friends. I really love that we all have similar values we withhold and share common interests among staff members, which helps support our teacher pedagogies and approaches to learning for our students.

What are your career highlights to date?

I live that I have my previous students always coming to my classroom and sharing their wins and positive moments within their day. It is so important to build respectful and positive relationships with our students. This has really helped students flourish.



Tom Wood-Burgess
Grade 4



History of employment?

My first job as a teenager was waiting tables at a café in Barwon Heads. Since then, I've worked as a maths tutor, administrator, event planner, and OSHC staff member. I began working as a CRT at Doncaster Primary School in 2022, and then as a classroom teacher last year.

What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at?

I love working with all the fantastic staff, students, and parents at DPS. Doncaster Primary has such a supportive community with a strong focus on the growth of all students in all areas of their lives, and I really enjoy that I get to play a part in that.

When not at school I like to...

When I'm not at school, I enjoy doing cross stitch, cooking, playing piano, singing, playing board games, card games, and Switch games, playing netball, coding, and spending time with my wife.



Grant Wachter
Grade 4



My favourite thing about Doncaster Primary?

My favourite thing about Doncaster Primary so far has been how welcoming and friendly all the staff and students have been. It has made starting work at a new school a very pleasant experience.

My favourite teacher.

My favourite teacher at school was Mr Kemp. He was a good fellow to have a chat too as well as a really good maths teacher. Even though he retired half way through year 12, he still helped me with my preparation for end of year VCE exams.

When not at school I like to..... go to the gym, play golf and spend time with my friends.

If I wasn't a teacher I would like to..... have been a professional sportsman, either a cricketer for Australia, or a pro golfer or tennis player. Getting to travel the world and play sport would be extremely enjoyable.



Vanessa Keen
Grade 5



History of employment?

I have worked at Doncaster Primary School since 2002 when I graduated from Deakin University. This is my 17th year of full time teaching.

What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at?

DPS is a great place to work because of the staff, the students, the families and the community. The staff in particular make every day a pleasure because they support each other and work hard to make the school the best it can be for the students and families.

When not at school I like to..... read books, do jigsaw puzzles and sew my own clothes.



Kathey Coumaros
Grade 5



History of employment? (where have you worked)

Previous to Doncaster PS, I came from the private sector.

I worked at Althlington Grammar for ten years in the junior/primary school.

What do you like about Doncaster Primary?

I really love the DPS Culture.

I thoroughly enjoy our students and love interacting with all the parents from various cultural backgrounds. I believe the teachers at DPS work very well together for the benefit of the whole school.

What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at

Definitely the students! Our DPS students come from various special unique places all around the world which makes our school one of a kind!

Skills and Achievements.

I have been fortunate to work both in the private and government sectors. This provides me with an enriching source of experiences. Whilst working at Althlington Grammar, I had the opportunity to complete a TEACHING FELLOWSHIP in Thessaloniki Greece. This was a amazing experience, as I was fortunate to teach overseas and attend university all in Greek! I developed my teaching skills and networking with teachers and colleagues across the globe.



Dimitra Ferizis
Grade 5



I enjoy working at DPS because of the amazing students who are always eager to learn and play. I am very lucky to work with my colleagues who are not only brilliant teachers but fun people. Encompassing DPS is our supportive community which includes our families.

My favourite teacher

My favourite teacher at school was my grade 4 teacher. She made learning in the classroom fun and often took us outside to play rounders. Not only was she kind, but she also supported us to follow our interests. The stories she told every morning about her home life allowed us to connect with her as a person.

There are so many things I like to do when I am not at school that I always run out of time and never get bored! I like to spend time on my own and do things like read and exercise. I love doing any activity that involves my family. We spend a lot of time outdoors in nature, enjoying all the seasonal weather.

If I wasn't a teacher?

If I wasn't a teacher I would follow the sun to different beaches around the world in my bathers and sarong, eating fresh fruit and sleeping under the stars, hearing the roar of the waves. But then I'd probably get bored and come back to the life I have, as I really do love what I do!!



Rana El-Bay
Grade 5



What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at?

Doncaster Primary School is such a wonderful school to work at because of the staff and students we have. The staff are all so passionate and supportive. I love that I can go to any member of DPS for guidance and they are always willing to lend a hand. The students here are amazing too, my favourite thing is that no matter what grade you teach, students of all ages know the staff and always greet us with big smiles.

When not at school I like to....

When I am not at school I love to spend time with my family. I am the youngest of 4 kids so my family are always getting together. I love taking my nieces and nephews out for fun activities. I also really love playing basketball and have been playing since I was 7!

If I wasn't a teacher, I would like to be

If I wasn't a teacher I would love to be a professional basketball player because that is my passion. I would even love to be a paramedic so that I can help others. I really enjoy watching all the ambulance shows on TV! History of employment - I have been at Doncaster Primary School since 2019. I started as a CRT for a couple of years which I loved because I got to teach all the year levels in the school. In 2022 I was offered a position as a level 5 teacher and have been teaching level 5 since then.



Andrew Johnson
Grade 6



History of employment?

I have enjoyed working in several schools over the past 16 years which has helped me learn a variety of different skills and approaches towards teaching. At my previous school I was the Wellbeing Coordinator and also taught PE and I was in the classroom too. I have been fortunate, over the years, to teach many year levels as a classroom teacher - Year 2, 4, 5 and 6. I have been working in Year 6 for some time now and enjoy the maturity, insight and emotional intelligence of these remarkable young people.

What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at?

It is a privilege to be part of the DPS community. Our students are respectful and motivated to learn. I am grateful to work with such supportive and passionate staff. I enjoy coming to DPS each day.

Who was your favourite teacher at school and why?

My favourite teacher was my Year 6 teacher, Mrs. Lando. She was a very caring, fair and kind teacher who saw the good in every student. She made her students feel valued and gave every child a voice.

When not at school I like to.....exercise - running, tennis and swimming are my favourite sports. I also enjoy photography, reading and the challenge of supporting the Carlton Football Club. I have been fortunate to travel to the USA, UK and Tonga and look forward to expanding my knowledge of other countries in my future travels.



Jeanette Milanese
Grade 6



What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at?

Doncaster Primary is an excellent school with wonderful students, great teachers and a friendly community. The culture of our school is always welcoming and inclusive and the staff at our school take pride in being committed to our student's development and learning.

What are your career highlights to date?

Canberra camp has been a highlight as I enjoy seeing students step out of their comfort zone and develop their independence. I have enjoyed coaching interschool sport teams and seeing our students work together to achieve success.

When not at school I like to.... I am passionate about photography and enjoy capturing moments. In my spare time, I like to attend and watch the Collingwood football club. My favourite activity to do on the weekend is playing with my three year old pug, Hugo.



Mary Scopas
Grade 6



History of employment?

Before becoming a teacher, I worked in customer service, Financial Services Administration, the Job Network, and training roles as well as doing a lot of volunteering at schools.

What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at?

Doncaster is a great school to work at because of the friendly and supportive school community including teachers, staff, parents, and students. We all work as a team dedicated to supporting our students achieve their best.

What are your career highlights to date?

My career highlights include working in industries that make a societal impact including coaching, training, and supporting jobseekers into paid employment, training employees to complete their job tasks, writing training manuals and working as a teacher at Doncaster Primary School.

When not at school I like to..... spend time with my family and friends, I enjoy baking cakes, cooking, going for long walks at the beach and travelling overseas with my family.

If I wasn't a teacher, I would like to be a travel agent and learn about different travel destinations and organise travel itineraries because I have a love of research, and I would be helping people to live out their travel dreams.



Martin Spinks
Physical Education



Who was your favourite teacher at school and why?

Funnily enough my 3 favourite teachers at primary and secondary school were all Physical Education teachers. In particular, Mr Moulding who was my primary school P.E. teacher. He was a no fuss guy with a beard who didn't take any nonsense but he made our classes really fun. He recognised when you had made an effort and gave you positive reinforcement without going over the top.

If I wasn't a teacher I would like to be.....

a professional athlete. Any sport would be great but probably in tennis. Apart from a professional athlete I would love to have been an osteopath helping people recover from ailments or assisting a sporting team reach the pinnacle in its chosen sport. When I retire I would love to pursue environmental causes such as clean up Australia.

When not at school I like to.....

Hang out with the family, ride my road bike on the weekends, play tennis on Tuesday nights in a men's tennis competition, tend to my veggie patch, re - watch Seinfeld episodes and watch the Brisbane Lions.

My family consists of my wife Janelle, who is a high school teacher, my 24 daughter Jordan, who works in child care, my middle daughter Ebony who has just finished university and my youngest daughter Kiara who is starting Year 9 this year. I also have a one eyed 10 year old maltese shih tzu named Charli.



Adam O'Callaghan
Science



What makes Doncaster a great school to work at!

Doncaster is a great school because of how all the students and teachers get along with each other. Anywhere you go in the school you will find someone who wants to talk and have fun. It is a great school culture that is just fun to be around and to be apart of.

When not at school I like to.....If I am not at school, I really enjoy snorkelling in the ocean. I love free diving and seeing all the underwater marine life. I love swimming with sharks and stingrays and exploring new underwater terrain.

If I wasn't a teacher, I would like to be..... a biologist, learning more about animals, such as where they live and what they eat. I especially would like to be a marine biologist so I can spend my days swimming in the ocean and showing others the amazing world of the ocean!

Career Highlight to date... My career highlight has been becoming the Science specialist. I have loved exploring the world around us and seeing all the amazing thoughts and ideas of all the students. I have also really enjoyed getting to know every student in the school. It is a real pleasure to know every student by name at DPS.



Marika Quinonero
Visual Arts



History of employment.

Before I was a teacher, I had a few different occupations. I had my own business where I created Business and Marketing plans for small businesses and new Start up businesses. I was also a Marriage Celebrant for about 10 years. Although my favourite occupation is Teaching of course!

When not at school I like to..... Try different recipes and then cook them for my friends and family. I also enjoy listening to music and travelling around Australia in our caravan.

If I wasn't a teacher - I would like to be nature photographer.



Lisa Foster
Cultural
Studies/Library



History of employment? Started at Doncaster in 2009 after working at a number of schools around Melbourne and even on a Disney cruise ship!

What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at? The cultural diversity is amazing! Students are proud of their background and eager to learn about others. The delicious sights and smells of their lunches from different cultures make me very jealous!

What are your career highlights to date? Designing, writing and implementing the Cultural Studies Curriculum from scratch. The students love coming to the library to learn which makes me very proud!

When not at school I like to.... spend time with my two gorgeous children, watch the footy and play video games. If I wasn't a teacher - I would like to be a travel tour guide. I love to travel and have visited over 30 countries. I especially enjoy trying all the new foods!



Gareth Dutlow
Performing Arts



History of employment? (where have you worked)

I began my teaching career at Oatlands Primary School, beginning in Prep before teaching Level 5, Visual Arts, and Level 2. In 2023 I began teaching at Doncaster Primary School as a casual relief teacher, before applying for the Performing Arts position.

Skills and Achievements

At the end of 2022, I began to pursue my dream to act and perform and had my stage debut in Australia's premiere of "Choir Boy" in 2023. I am excited to have my television debut later this year in "Neighbours".

Who was your favourite teacher at school and why?

I was very lucky to have amazing teachers throughout my time in school. I don't know if I could pick one because I have fond memories of many teachers encouraging me to use my talents and pursue my dreams. I hope that I can be that kind of teacher for the students of Doncaster Primary School.

When not at school I like to.....

I have recently enjoyed spending time around nature, whether in the Dandenong Ranges or at the beach. I also love to visit my favourite sushi restaurant, get a bubble tea, and see a movie at the cinemas. I enjoy my down time, whether alone or with a small group of friends.



Jayne Hill

TLI



History of employment?

I started working at DPS back in 2012 teaching Prep. Before teaching I used to work as a Nurse at the Royal Children's Hospital.

My career highlight to date.

Has been running the Tutor Learning Initiative and helping students improve their reading and numeracy post covid. I find this very rewarding, and I love this role.

What do you like about Doncaster Primary?

The wonderful, dedicated staff and beautiful students make Doncaster Primary School a great school to work at.

When not at school I like to..... spend time with my three daughters aged 3, 6 and 8. I also like to cheer on the Geelong Cats at the footy and go to the gym.



History of employment?

I have been teaching for 11 years. I began my teaching career with a year of CRT work to try and find the right school and I came across a lovely little school in Camberwell which I spent 8 of those years teaching at. I then had twins and took a year off work- I felt that after 8 years, it was time for a change, so I began to CRT again until I came across Doncaster Primary School and felt it was the perfect fit for me. I have been at DPS for just over a year now and I love it!

What do you like about Doncaster Primary?

The staff, the students, and the community. I have never come across a happier more caring and helpful bunch of people in my life. I feel so lucky to come to work and enjoy my time here. The students are always happy and beautifully mannered, and the parents are so approachable, kind, and grateful for the work we do as staff.

My family.

My husband Archie and I have a set of 4-year-old twins Aston and Aria and another little boy on the way. Our twins are obsessed with our little dog Biggie and are really excited about a new baby. We live locally, having grown up in Doncaster and Mont Albert- we wanted to stay close to extended family as we highly value their support and contribution to our children's lives. We love the area we live in!

When not at school I like to.....

As a family we love to spend time together and travel, we try and get away twice a year and love trying new places. I love spending quality time with my twins so every afternoon (weather permitting) I try to take them to the park.

My husband and I are both football fans and follow the Carlton Football Club. So, on the weekends you will find us losing our voices at the footy, we never miss a game!





Rida Su
LOTE



History of employment? (where have you worked)

Hello, everyone. My name is Rida, and I am the new LOTE (Chinese) teacher at DPS this year. My personal belief in 2nd Language Learning is '*All students can learn*'! As an open-minded and caring educator, I have worked at several schools (**Horsham-Bendigo-Melbourne**) in the past (including both public and private schools). My recent employment was at Alamanda K-9 College in Point Cook, where I worked as the PLC LOTE leader for the IB PYP LOTE programme (P-6).

Who was your favourite teacher at school, and why?

My favourite teacher at school was my Year 11 VCE Economics teacher from Spain. I like him a lot because he took his time getting to know me well as an international student from overseas and assisted me in becoming interested in Australian Economics.

When not at school, I like to.....

In my spare time, I like to walk alongside the beach, hunt for food, go for a day trip as an adventure or complete some DIY projects (e.g., watching a YouTube video clip to draw a creative picture or making some interesting crafts).

If I wasn't a teacher, I would like to be.....

Being a teacher is my childhood dream 😊. If I can choose an alternative career other than being a teacher, I would like to be a food taster or an artistic freelancer.



Joan Tan-Lawson
Education Support



What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at?

I love working alongside the wonderful staff at DPS and supporting the learning of our amazing students. I always look forward to greeting our school families at the gate in the morning, especially seeing the excited faces of the children as they walk, skip or scoot to school.

What are your career highlights to date?

I have loved going along to all the camps during my time at DPS. These experiences have provided me with opportunities to get to know the children outside of the school environment, seeing them enjoy new experiences and bonding with their peers and teachers.

When not at school I like to..... spend time in my garden, hang out with my family (including two cats) or exploring new eateries, trying out new cuisines. I also like to travel and experience different cultures.



Wendy Fairly
Education Support



If I wasn't an ES.

I would still work with children. Before I had my family I worked in daycare, after having children I did family daycare from home.

History of employment?

I have been an ES for over 20 years.

My Family

I am a mother of 4 children. 2 boys and 2 girls. I am a nana to eight beautiful grandchildren.

When I am not at work I like to..... I am babysitting. My hobbies are sewing, knitting and gardening.



Wendy McGeary
Education Support



History of Employment.

24 years with the education department, Chatham P.S, Parkmore P.S and Doncaster P.S for 20 years.

Skills and Achievements.

Craft work and displays.

Supporting children over many uyears with a nurturing hand, watching them develop socially and academically to achiev their personal bests in whatever they have attempted.

Career Hights.

Librarian – Library technician for 11 years along with producing large handmade displays.

My Family.

I have 3 sons, 2 residing in Melbourne and 1 in Queensland plus I have 3 wonderful grandchildren. Luckily my 2 year old grandchildren lives close by where I have had the pleasure of watching her grow from birth to her now adorable cheeky self.



Asha Joseph
Education Support



History of Employment.

I have been a graphic designer for about 15 years before becoming an Education Support Worker in 2022.

What I love about Doncaster Primary School.

I love the values we have at DPS. They are good life reminders to the kids (and adults)!

When not at school.

I love trying new foods, and spending time at the beach.

My Family.

I have a wonderfully supportive husband and 2 boys, one is 7 (Grade 2) and the other 9 (Grade 4). They are my whole world.



Elsie Chan
Education Support



History of employment.

My education career began in Hong Kong where I worked as a secondary school teacher for 9 years. After I arrived in Melbourne I work as an education support staff until now.

What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at?

DPS is a great school to work at because the school is student-centered. Full of kindness, full of love and caring. You can always see happy face around the campus, no matter the staffs, the parents or the students, that make me feel so good to be part of here.

If I wasn't a teacher, I would like to be....If I wasn't a teacher, I would like to be a flight attendant. As I can travel around the world while I am working!

When not at school I like to - When not at school I like to watch movies, travel around, singing, playing video games and board games, jogging, go shopping, hang out with family and friend and good book.



Keyla
Gleciano Alcantara
Education Support



History of Employment.

My background is in Sociology and Social Research. I worked for many years for non-profit organisations in South America until I moved to Europe to further my studies. I worked for United Nations in emergency programs in South Asia and multinational engineering companies before moving to Australia. After COVID, I felt passionate about children's mental health, and I decided to study Mindfulness for Children and School Based Education Support which led me to work currently as an Integration Aide.

What do you like about Doncaster Primary?

I love the multiculturalism among the students and the friendly and kind school staff. Every week, I go home learning something new from the children. The Education Support team is fantastic, and I feel supported and well looked after by them.

When not at school I like to.....

Spend time with my two sons, go for family walks, enjoy a nice cup of coffee, go to the beach and pool during summer and snuggle in winter. I am currently developing a Wellbeing Mental Health Online Program for Children so that is keeping me busy too.

If I wasn't an Education Support I would like to be.....

I would like to have my own non-profit organisation to help and assist children from refugee and asylum seekers families when arriving in Australia. I will be focusing on educational programs, community integration, advocacy for their human rights and raising awareness.



Demi Loukos
Education Support



What do you like about Doncaster Primary?

Doncaster Primary School is a great school to work at because of the wonderful staff and students. Every staff member is passionate about what they do, which reflects on the students as they love coming to school each day, eager to learn, with a smile on their faces. As an ES, I'm excited to work alongside students to help them reach their full potential and feel very fortunate being apart of a Prep classroom to begin as I'm able to watch them gain confidence during their first year of schooling.

Who was your favourite teacher at school at why?

My favourite teacher at Primary School was my Grade 4 teacher, Miss Lewis. She was bubbly and nurturing, and always knew how to make school enjoyable. I aspire to be like her when I become a primary school teacher in the future, and she was a big part of the reason why I decided to pursue teaching!

When not at school I love tospend time with my family and friends, going to the beach, travelling, and playing netball.

If I wasn't a teacher I would like to be — I would like to be a Nurse or Paramedic!



Zhara Mellor
Education Support



History employment.

I have worked in before and after care organisations for the past 3-4 years, casually and part time. I really enjoyed being a co-ordinator at my previous job, being able to set up a room and activity plan was great! Previous to this I was working at Kmart as that was my first job!

What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at?

I have really loved working at DPS this past year as its my first job actually inside of a school! All the staff, children and parents have always been so kind, I have learned so much from the teachers and other ES staff i have worked with, which i am so grateful for!

When not at school I like to...

I enjoy spending time with friends and family, trying new restaurants and cafes, going to the beach and shopping! I have also recently taken up sewing as a hobby and look forward to making some cool things!

If I wasn't an Education Support I would like to be.....

I would love to be a teacher or work in the field of criminology! I studied a bachelor of criminology and have always found it interesting but would love to do a master of primary teaching next year to become a teacher.



Ally Wei
Education Support



History of employment? I have two years of experience as an educator in the childcare industry, as well as two years of experience as a language teacher. After having completed my Certificate IV in School Based Education Support, I started working as an ES at DPS in 2023.

Skills and Achievements.

I am fluent in English, Mandarin and Cantonese. I love using my knowledge to broaden children's language skills and help them to understand another culture.

Who was your favourite teacher at school and why?

PrepW teacher Miss White is my favourite teacher. She is kind and sweet. She always encouraged and cared for all her students. She is like sunshine, making everyone around her feel warmth.

If I wasn't an Education Support I would like to be.....If I wasn't an Education Support I would like to be an interpreter as I enjoy working closely with a wide variety of people.



Sophie Stokes
Education Support



History of employment? (where have you worked)

This is my first year working at Doncaster Primary School as an education support staff member. I spent the last year working at Aquinas College, where I attended High School & worked there as a GAP year sport assistant, which then lead me to want to work in education.

What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at?

DPS is a great school to be working at. All of the staff are so friendly and welcoming, which made settling into my job so easy. I also love how diverse the DPS community is and how friendly all of the students are.

When not at school I like to..... spend time with my friends and family. I also love to run and spend a lot of my time at the athletics track with my running squad.

If I wasn't an Education Support I would like to be..... a personal trainer or sport coach to share my love of sport with others, or a physiotherapist.



Barry Beechey
Groundsman



History of employment.

I began teaching in the 1970s. Most of my teaching was in country schools. I also taught for seven years in the special education system. For many years I was Principal in a number of primary schools until I retired from full time work to become a groundman, a job I thoroughly enjoy.

What makes Doncaster Primary a great school to work at.

DPS is a wonderful school due to the great kids who are always well mannered, cheerful and they're as proud of their school as I am. They have been involved in planting lots of shrubs, bushes and trees in the years I have been here and we can see the fruits of "our" labour all around us. As students have been involved in the planting program, and looking after the schools, they have a strong sense of ownership.

When not at school I like to..... go bushwalking, cycling and swimming to keep fit and active. I also enjoy the theatre and travel. I have lived and worked overseas, a highlight being three years at the RAAF school in Penang in the 1980's.

If I wasn't a teacher or ESS I would like to..... be a landscape gardener, but I do that now and teaching is an admirable vocation which I am proud to be a part of.

Who was your favourite teacher at school and why? It is hard to say who was my favourite teacher when I was at school because I had so many great teachers who guided me through my education. I enjoyed school so much I literally never left.