

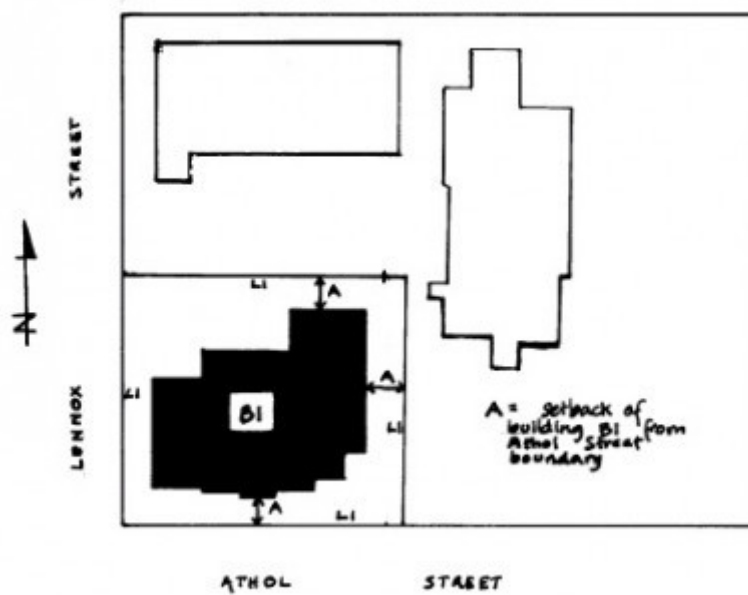
# INFANT BUILDING, MOONEE PONDS WEST PRIMARY SCHOOL



INFANT BUILDING,  
MOONEE PONDS WEST  
PRIMARY SCHOOL SOHE  
2008



1 infant building moonee  
ponds west primary school  
eglington street moonee  
ponds street view oct1996



infant building moonee ponds west primary school eglington street moonee ponds plan



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**Location**

150 ATHOL STREET MOONEE PONDS, MOONEE VALLEY CITY

**Municipality**

MOONEE VALLEY CITY

**Level of significance**

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1321

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO142

## VHR Registration

June 19, 1997

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - March 14, 2023

### What is significant?

The Moonee Ponds West Primary School opened on 14 February 1888. In 1911 two blocks adjoining the school were acquired as the site for a new, detached infant school building. As a result of the Fink Commission (1899) which had recommended the construction of independent infant schools in Victoria, 53 infant buildings were constructed between 1901 and 1939. The Moonee Ponds West example is in the pavilion style, an Edwardian design adopted by the Public Works Department for infant buildings constructed between 1907 and 1915. Designed by Public Works architect George William Watson (1850-1915), the Moonee Ponds West infant building opened in June 1913.

### How is it significant?

The infant building at the Moonee Ponds West Primary School is of architectural and historical importance to the State of Victoria.

The infant building at the Moonee Ponds West State School is architecturally and historically important as an intact, representative example of the pavilion style building which was designed for preparatory grade children during the Edwardian years. The interior is significant for retaining the original floor plan and layout of seven classrooms, cloak room, office and large central hall. The decorative elements of the hall interior are particularly noteworthy; the west, east and south elevations feature stained glass windows depicting rosellas, galahs, magpies and kookaburras, and the ceiling has a polished timber hammer beam roof studded with decorative, square-shaped ventilator openings. Of further historical interest is the large, polished timber honour board on the north wall commemorating past students who served in the Great War 1914-1919. The exterior is important for the same degree of intactness, as it retains all the Edwardian elements of the building's pavilion design, notably the octagonal-plan domed ventilators which prominently feature in the decorative massing of the roofscape.

### Why is it significant?

The Moonee Ponds West infant building is architecturally and historically important for its associations with its designer, George William Watson, chief Public Works architect between the years 1910-1915.

## Permit Exemptions

### General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

### **Specific Exemptions:**

EXEMPTIONS FROM PERMITS: (Classes of works or activities which may be undertaken without a permit under Part 4 of the Heritage Act 1995):

Interior painting of previous painted surfaces

Replacement of flexible floor coverings such as vinyl and carpet

|                         |                    |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Construction dates      | 1911,              |
| Architect/Designer      | Watson, George W., |
| Heritage Act Categories | Registered place,  |
| Hermes Number           | 5239               |
| Property Number         |                    |

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## **History**

Contextual History:History of Place:

Almost a third of Victoria's nineteenth century urban state schools were built by the Education Department during its first three years of operation from 1873-76. A demand for more state primary schools however, began to grow again by 1885. There was overcrowding in South Melbourne and Prahran, and plans had to be made for extra classrooms at Essendon and Kensington. New schools were erected at East Brunswick, Maribyrnong and North Brunswick, and Flemington had to be reopened. Rural schools were also needed; of the sixty-one built in 1886-87, forty-five were in country areas, many being for new settlements.

The Moonee Ponds West (formerly known as Ascot Vale West) State School opened on 14 February 1888 in a hall at the corner of Mirams Street and Union Road, which was leased for £30 per annum. On opening it had an attendance of 148 children. In the following year an allotment of 1.5 acres bounded by Lennox, Athol, Bowen and



Eglington Streets was purchased for £950 and a school to accommodate 500 pupils was erected at a cost of £4,500. As with much of inner Melbourne during the 1880s, Moonee Ponds boomed with domestic and commercial development. Attendances at the school soared rapidly reaching 946 in 1893. Various measures to provide more classrooms included the leasing of the Temperance Hall in St Leonard's Road and the removal and re-erection of Fawkner State School No.447 for use as an infant room. In its first half century the school had only nine head teachers.

#### Infant School Buildings

The Fink Commission (1899) had recommended independent infant's schools. These did not ensue, but the first detached infants school building was built in Essendon in 1901. This was the prototype for a group of symmetrical gable-roofed infant's buildings which featured a central pavilion hall with classrooms clustered around, and prominent roof ventilators consisting of shafts with conical caps. Such ventilators became standard design practice for Public Works Department schools, and from 1899 until around 1923 every new school was provided with them. Detached infant school buildings of the Edwardian period were built between 1901 and 1939. According to Petersen's study fifty-three were constructed.

#### History of Place:

In 1911 two blocks adjoining Moonee Ponds West State School with an Athol Street frontage of 132 feet were acquired as the site for a new infant school of seven rooms, a hall, cloak room and office. The cost for erecting the building was approximately the same amount as for the earlier 1889 school premises (£4,500). It was designed by the Public Works Department under supervising architect, George William Watson, and opened in June 1913.

Separate infant pavilions of this type were designed from 1907 to 1915, and commonly incorporated a large main hall varying from 57 feet to 58 feet by 28 feet to 32 feet, surrounded by five to seven classrooms, an office and a cloakroom. The latter are very large, often 57 feet by 12 feet running the whole length of one side of the hall. The buildings themselves were usually characterised by the use of red brick, with terra cotta rooves, ridge tiles and finials. The roof shape was half hip, hip or jerkin-head. In some earlier examples the gable rooves were symmetrical and timbered. Chimneys had terra cotta pots and broad rough-cast bands. Ceilings were often covered on the line of the scissor-truss roof with up-cast shaft roof ventilators. Windows were either triple or quadruple sash with highlights and shallow curved heads. The most prominent and characteristic elements were the two octagonal plan, domed ventilators over the hall and notable leadlight windows occasionally depicting Australian flora and fauna. Sometimes the the hall had a hammer-beam roof structure.

Richard Petersen identified nineteen such Edwardian infant pavilions of this type from the period between 1901-1914. Of the seven that incorporated Australian flora and fauna leadlight windows, those at Auburn, Footscray and Moonee Ponds were recommended for addition to the Heritage Register.

#### George William Watson (1850-1908)

Born and educated in England, George Watson entered the Department soon after his arrival in the colony on 26 October 1872. He was an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects for twenty-one years and also the representative of the Society of Architects (London) in Australia. He designed and carried out many large and important government buildings including, the Sunbury Lunatic Asylum, the Public Buildings and Law Courts in Sandhurst (Bendigo), the Female Prison at Pentridge, as well as many schools, court houses and police buildings in metropolitan Melbourne and country Victoria. Watson was chief Public Works architect between the years 1910-1915, and died on 26 July 1915.

## Extent of Registration

### NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the Heritage Act, I give notice under Section 46 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by including the Heritage Register Number 1321 in the category of Heritage Place:

### EXTENT

Infant Building, Moonee Ponds West Primary School, 123 Eglington Street, Moonee Ponds, Moonee Valley City Council.

1. All the building marked B1 on Diagram 607695 held by the Executive Director.
2. All the land marked L1 on Diagram 607695 held by the Executive Director, being part of the land described in Certificate of Title Vol. 1851 Folio 052.

Dated 5 June 1997  
RAY TONKIN  
Executive Director

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*