

## ASCOT VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL NO. 2608



Ascot Vale PS 2608 1885/8 building



Ascot Vale PS 2608 infants school



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Ascot Vale PS 2608 infants school



Ascot Vale PS 2608 infants school



17 - 27 Bank Street (2).JPG

### Location

15-27 BANK STREET, ASCOT VALE, MOONEE VALLEY CITY

### Municipality

MOONEE VALLEY CITY

### Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

### Heritage Overlay Numbers

## Heritage Listing

Moonee Valley City

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

#### What is significant?

The Ascot Vale Primary School No.2608, comprising the original school designed by the Public Works Department and built in 1885 with additions in 1888 and the infants' school designed under the direction of J.B. Cohen and built in 1901-02, is significant. The 1885/8 school, which faces the street, is a large symmetrically composed Queen Anne-style building. The infants' school, situated at the rear of the 1885/8 school, is a single-storey freestanding red brick building that stylistically references, albeit in a restrained manner, the earlier building. The 1885/8 building was remodelled around the time the infants' school was completed. These works included replacement of most of the pointed arched window openings and removal of some chimneys. More recent works to the building replaced the original slate roof cladding with corrugated steel sheeting, and the removal of a central spire and roof gables.

Post-World War II alterations and additions to the above buildings, and other buildings on the site are not significant.

#### How is it significant?

Ascot Vale Primary School No.2608 is of local historic, social and architectural significance to the City of Moonee Valley.

#### Why is it significant?

Historically, it is significant as one of the oldest schools in Ascot Vale and demonstrates the development of state primary education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It also illustrates the significant population growth during the land boom of the late nineteenth century. (Criterion A)

The 1885/8 school is architecturally and aesthetically significant as an example of a late nineteenth century Department of Education school building. Although some of its original detailing has been removed, it retains its original symmetry, which is emphasised by the bold arrangement of projecting gables, massing and a significant amount of original fabric that makes it evocative of late-nineteenth century educational buildings in Victoria. (Criteria D & E)

The infants school of 1901-2 is historically and architecturally significant as one of the first infants schools constructed in Victoria. It demonstrates the new approach, which provided specific facilities for infant children in the early twentieth century. Notable features include the original layout comprising a central hall surrounded by classrooms. The roof ventilators are also of note as one of the earliest example of this feature, which would become a universal feature of school design in the twentieth century. (Criteria A & D)

It is socially significant as a place that is known, used and valued by the local community for over 100 years. (Criterion G)

Heritage  
Study/Consultant

Moonee Valley - Moonee Valley Heritage Overlay Places Review, David Helms Heritage Planning, 2012; Moonee Valley - City of Moonee Valley Heritage Study, Andrew Ward, 1998;

Other Names

Review, Ascot Vale State School No.2608, Infants' School,

## Physical Description 1

Ascot Vale Primary School No.2608 is situated on the south side of Bank Street, Ascot Vale. It comprises a complex of buildings dating from the late nineteenth century to the early twenty-first century. The significant buildings on the site are:

- the original school, facing Bank Street, which was built in 1885, extended in 1888 and 1902, and altered in 1914-5
- the former Infants' School, situated immediately behind the 1885/8 school, which was built in 1901-2

The original school building is a large Queen Anne influenced polychrome brick school. It is symmetrical in plan with a central building (presumed to be the 1885 school) with a complex hip and gable roof, which is flanked by recessed smaller wings (presumed to be the 1888 additions) with hipped roofs and projecting gables. The main elevation is distinguished by the dominant gable ends with louvred vents, and attic windows to the central roof gable. As noted below, most of the original windows have been enlarged - original examples include the tall narrow 'six over six' sash windows in various locations, and the pointed arch windows in the projecting gable of the east wing and in some of the rear elevations. The entrance doorway on the west side appears to be original, while the main entrance on the east side has been altered. Other original details include the decorative timber brackets flanking the window in the west end wall.

The building is in good condition and has a moderate degree of external integrity. Internally, the building appears to retain much of its original or early layout and some original detailing including multi-paned windows and doors, and wainscoting. Notable fixtures include three honour rolls (one listing 'dux of school' for the 1920s and 30s, others listing students who served in the world wars). External alterations include:

- the replacement of the original roof material with colourbond.
- the enlargement of most of the original pointed arch windows to the projecting gable ends with larger windows with horizontal lintels.
- the removal of king post and half-timber detail from the gable ends.
- the removal of the slender central tower feature and gabled roof vents.
- the removal of all but one of the original chimneys.

The former Infants' School is a freestanding single-storey brick Edwardian building, which is sited on axis with the centre of the principal, or central, block of the 1888-90 building, concealing it from view from Bank Street. The rear of the building is, however, visible from Moonee Street but is set back from this street behind a deep playground.

The infant block is relatively symmetrical in plan. Its original internal planning, comprising of a central Drill Hall flanked by four classrooms can still be interpreted in the buildings fabric. The existing modified internal planning of the building adopts more of a free-plan, as some internal partition walls have been removed to create larger spaces.

Stylistically, the former infants school references the character of the earlier school building on the site, albeit in a simpler, or restrained, interpretation of its detailing. The infants building has a dominant hip and gable roof, which is clad in slate tiles and has original roof vents. The external walls of the building have face red brick, with a band of cream brick at cill level. Elsewhere cream brick is used above the heads of doors. Windows are timber frame double-hung sashes, originally with six panes in each sash, with a fixed multi-paned panel of glazing above - as noted in the history in 1927-8 the lower sash of some of these windows were extended to contain nine panes. Other original details include two brick chimneys with cement rendered detailing, louvred vents at the peak of the gable ends, small decorative brackets at the gable ends, and metal wall vents.

A projecting central bay with a gable roof on the north elevation is directly in line of, and facing, a similar element on the south elevation of the 1888-90 building, indicating the intention of the design was to enable each building to be seamlessly linked if required - as noted in the history the two buildings were originally linked by a 'covered way', which was later removed (a modern 'sail cloth' now performs this function) and used to create two verandahs on the infants' school, one of which survives at the north west side of the building.

The former infants' school is in good condition and has a moderate degree of external integrity. External changes include:

- the removal of timber detailing to the gable ends (shown on original plans).
- the closing of the original door in the south elevation and the creation of a new doorway in one of the original windows.
- modifications to the original door opening in the east elevation.
- a flat roof brick addition on the north-east side.

*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/>*