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# MOONEE PONDS WEST PRIMARY SCHOOL NO.2901



Moonee Valley West PS 2901



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## Location

150 ATHOL STREET, and 132 EGLINTON STREET, MOONEE PONDS, MOONEE VALLEY CITY

## Municipality

MOONEE VALLEY CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO142

## Heritage Listing

Moonee Valley City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

### What is significant?

The Moonee Ponds West Primary School No.2901, comprising the original school to the extent of the 1889 fabric and the 1924-5 additions is significant. Designed in an asymmetrically composed restrained Gothic-Revival-style the 1889 school is typical of the schools designed by the Public Works Department as part of the Government school building program that followed the passing of the *Education Act 1872*.

To its southwest is an infants school that was erected in 1911-12, which is included on the *Victorian Heritage Register*.

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

### How is it significant?

Moonee Ponds West Primary School No.2901 is of local historic, social and architectural significance to the City of Moonee Valley.

The infants school is significant to the State of Victoria (Please refer to the Victorian Heritage Register citation)

### Why is it significant?

Historically, it is significant as one of the oldest schools in the City of Moonee Valley and demonstrates the development of state primary education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It also illustrates the significant population growth in Moonee Ponds during the land boom of the late nineteenth century and again in the early twentieth century. The infant school is of particular significance as an illustration of the separate facilities provided for infant children in the early twentieth century. (Criterion A)

The 1889 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 much of its original character, particularly on the east elevation (originally the front of the school), which is notable for its tower, with a quatrefoil and a diagonal buttress at its base, pointed arched window and door openings, with some windows retaining their original timber tracery-effect. The 1924-5 additions, whilst generally sympathetic, demonstrate the development in school design, particularly the need for improved lighting to classrooms. As such, the school has research potential in the development of school design in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. (Criterion C, D & E)

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

Heritage Study/Consultant	Moonee Valley - Review of HO precincts, David Helms HPM, 2010;
Construction dates	1888, 1912, 1924,
Architect/Designer	Smith, Edwin Evan, Watson, George W., Public Works Department,
Other Names	Review,
Hermes Number	181593
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

The Moonee Ponds West Primary School No.2901 comprises a complex of buildings dating from the late nineteenth to the early twenty-first century. The significant buildings are:

- The original school building, dating from 1889 and remodelled in 1924-5
- The Infants' School, dating from 1912-3 (Please refer to the Victorian Heritage Register for a detailed description of this building).

The 1889 building is a polychrome brick single-storey late-Victorian state school. The front (east) elevation once faced Bowen Street, but this street has since been discontinued between Eglinton and Athol Streets. The front elevation now faces inwards into the site, towards a playground that extends to its east. This change to its environs has restricted the appreciation from the public realm of its original front facade, which is of a highly detailed and sophisticated design. A recent (c.2010) classroom addition, of an unsympathetic contemporary design, which abuts this building at its northeast corner, has also significantly impacted upon the character of the building.

The building is designed in a restrained Gothic Revival-style, but using elements associated with this style sparingly. These include pointed arched window openings with timber tracery, a squat spire, with a quatrefoil, above the pointed arched front entrance, and a diagonal buttress at the base of the spire. However, the original Gothic Revival character of the building has been diluted by the replacement of some window openings with larger windows with rendered horizontal lintels as part of remodelling works carried out in 1924-5 (see below). Most of the windows on the building are timber frame and have multi-panel glazing.

The building has a transverse gable roof, with smaller gables projecting from its east elevation. The roof of the building is clad in unglazed terracotta tiles (not original). The ends of the gables have timber fretwork. Projecting up from the roof are unusually tall and slender red brick chimneys with rendered cappings. One of these chimneys is sited awkwardly close to the spire, which diminishes the effect, or more specifically the prominence, of the latter element. The exterior walls are red face brickwork, which are relieved with bands of cream and dark brick. A dual band of cream and dark brick extends above the bluestone base of the walls.

As noted in the history, the 1885 school was remodelled and extended in 1924-5. Apart from the window enlargements the works also included the construction of two gabled bays of classrooms on its west elevation, and another gabled bay constructed on the north elevation that also contained a classroom. A small porch on west elevation was enlarged to create a cloakroom. These additions were undertaken sympathetically, using similar materials and detailing reflecting the character of the original building. Internally, additional classrooms were created by subdividing larger rooms.

The infants building is situated to the southwest of the 1885 school building. Although this is stylistically different to the original building, the infants building complements it in scale and materials.

*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/>*