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architecture +
urban design

grimwade house upper primary precinct

location grimwade house caulfield melbourne australia

status completed september 2009

client melbourne grammar school

photography john gollings

Grimwade House is the co-educational junior school of Melbourne Grammar catering for the educational needs of some 550 boys and girls from prep to grade 6. Grimwade House was founded in 1917 following the gift of the Harlestone property from the Grimwade family. The campus has a village like atmosphere that owes much to the nineteenth and early twentieth century foundation buildings and gardens. Buildings are loosely linked around a network of courtyards, pathways and gardens with easy access to generous and leafy play spaces. The school has been progressively implementing a master plan since 1998 which has seen most buildings renovated with the addition of a number of significant new buildings and open spaces.

The Upper Primary precinct provides the home-base for grades 5 & 6 in three interlinked buildings centred around an outdoor deck and atrium space. The project includes two refurbished 1960's classroom buildings (the Down and Clayfield Wings) and adds a new infill building and glass roofed atrium with interlinked balconies. The accommodation provides for eight classrooms with staff resource rooms, an art studio, library, IT studio with technicians facilities and 3 music practice rooms.

The project has integrated numerous environmental, energy and sustainability measures based on the "green star"- education pilot rating tool (aspired 4-star). Special attention has been applied to the thermal performance of existing and new structures, controlled use of double glazing with external shading, the provision of roof lanterns for daylight and high level ventilation, all rooms have natural cross ventilation including night purge mode, a thermal labyrinth has been created under the library to temper fresh air, rain water is collected off all roofs including adjoining buildings and stored in tanks, photo voltaic panels have been incorporated into the glass atrium roof and all equipment and materials have been carefully selected. The energy performance of the buildings will be monitored by the students as part of the educational program within the school.

The Upper Primary precinct has a very welcoming atmosphere and identity as the main atrium arrival space becomes the social meeting place before and after classes. The atrium is like a large semi- outdoor room as it is enclosed on three sides by buildings which spill activity out onto a large timber deck and first floor balconies and bridges.

