



SCHOOL LIFE  
OF THE PAST

We acknowledge the Wallumedegal Peoples of the Darug Nation, the Traditional Owners of the land on which the Schoolhouse Museum stands. We pay our respect to Elders past and present and recognise the continuing learning systems of Aboriginal Peoples on this land.

School	Contact teacher	Phone number

Date/s	No. of classes	Grade/s	No. of students

**Cost** – \$24.00 per student. Accompanying adults free. An invoice will be sent after the visit. No GST. A PO number needs to be provided or there is a surcharge of \$0.40 per student for P-card payments (public schools).

**Accompanying adults** – A minimum of two parent/carer or adult helpers are needed to supervise the toasting activity. A maximum of two parent/carer helpers per class can attend.

### Teacher checklist

- Excursion plan** – emailed to each teacher for their class preparations
- Name tags** – first name only, essential for us to personalise the sessions, pinned on works well
- Hand sanitiser, first aid, student medical kits** – for use by your staff and students as required
- Toasting helpers briefed** – please send the video [Briefing for Toasting Activity \(https://youtu.be/cTRLdTS2YNw\)](https://youtu.be/cTRLdTS2YNw).
- Fire safety** – brief students on basic fire safety when near an open fire. There's a toasting pic in the [social story](#).
- Lunch and drinks** – BYO. There are no tea or coffee making facilities. Take-away is nearby or BYO thermos.
- Bags** – small backpacks or library bags are best as birds can get into plastic bags
- Wet weather gear** – needed for moving between spaces on rainy days
- Sun hats, water bottles** – the outdoor sessions can be sunny and hot. There is minimal air conditioning indoors.
- Letter from Molly** – read the letter to your students before your visit
- Additional needs notified** – let us know if you have students with additional needs or need the wheelchair ramp
- Change in numbers** – notify us if the number of students booked has changed. This impacts our staffing.

### Program

	Class A	Class B	Class C
10.00–10.20	Arrival and morning tea. We will collect your students at <b>10.20am</b> .		
10.25–11.10	Recreated 1880s lesson in 1877 room	Source-based activities in 1910 room	Drill, maypole, outdoor games
11.15–12.00	Source-based activities in 1910 room	Drill, maypole, outdoor games	Recreated 1880s lesson in 1877 room
12.05–12.50	Drill, maypole, outdoor games	Recreated 1880s lesson in 1877 room	Source-based activities in 1910 room
1.00	Lunch/Depart		

## Visit information

**Wet weather** – the excursion will go ahead. Indoor drill and craft will replace the games session. Maypole dancing will be omitted due to lack of space. The students need wet weather gear for moving between spaces.

**Location** – GPS 154 Cox's Road, North Ryde, at the top of the North Ryde Public School grounds. Buses can drop off students at the Cox's Road bus stop outside the school. Enter through the **picket gate near the zebra crossing**.

**Social story** – the [social story](#) can help prepare students for their visit.

**Pre and post visit learning resources** – on our [Resources](#) page. [Pre and post visit resource](https://bit.ly/3N0Dkfl) (<https://bit.ly/3N0Dkfl>).

**Molly letter** – 1 to 2 weeks before your visit you will receive in the mail a handwritten letter from fictional Molly Mathers. Students will solve the mystery during their excursion. Students are welcome to write to Molly after their visit.

**Souvenirs** – email your order: [\\$6 pen and ink sets](#) – can be added to your school invoice.

**Driveway and car park safety** – avoid these areas. The driveway beside the museum and rear car park is used for vehicle access. Please supervise student movement and use the marked walkway near the classrooms and grass.

**Play areas** – there is no access to the play equipment. The oval can be used but not between 11.10am-12.10pm and 1.50pm-2.10pm or if North Ryde PS students are on it. Alternative play areas are the tennis court, under the trees or in front of the museum buildings on the asphalt and grass.

**Risk management advice and COVID-19 safety checklist** – on our [Schools page](#).

**Toasting helpers** – two adult helpers are needed to supervise the toasting activity in which students cook toast over an open fire. This could be two parent/carers for the whole group who remain at the fire for the whole excursion, or two per class who are at the fire for one session. **The helpers cannot be the class teacher or class teachers' aide** as both are needed to supervise their students in other areas of the classroom.

**Bread and golden syrup ingredients labels** – are on our [Schools page](#). Please bring an alternative for students with allergies and notify our staff at the start of the day.

**Cancellations** – confirmed bookings cancelled within four school-term weeks (28 days) before the booked date will incur a \$500 administration fee. This does not apply to cancellations due to extreme weather, last minute bus company cancellations or COVID-19.

**COVID-19 related cancellations** – cancellations due to COVID-19 guidelines or situations will not incur a cancellation fee. Please provide as much notice as possible as casual staff have been allocated to work on your excursion days.

## Session outlines

### Inquiry questions

- How has school and everyday life changed and remained the same over time?
- How do we know what school was like in the past for children and teachers?
- What aspects of past schooling can be seen today and what do they tell us?
- How have changes in technology shaped our schooling and daily lives?

### Recreated 1880s school lesson – 1877 schoolroom

The focus of this session is on recreating aspects of schooling in the 1880s. Before entering the schoolroom, lined up in single-gender lines, daily chores and travelling to school in the past will be highlighted. Palms of hands will be shown to the teacher as they were in the past. An oath to Queen and country will be recounted.

Inside the schoolroom, sitting on long-toms at original 1880s desks, the students will practise their times tables and read along using a copy of an 1880s reader. Students will write Copperplate using a slate and slate pencil as well as writing with pen and ink as examples of changing writing technologies. Examples of early school discipline strategies will be mentioned during the lesson with reference made to the cane and an early school punishment book.

During the session, primary sources will be used, personal stories told and similarities and differences discussed using the language 'then' and 'now', 'past' and 'present' and 'a long time ago'.

### Hands-on primary sources – 1910 rooms

The focus of this session is on examining and interacting with objects used at school in the past. The session will start with Australia's former national anthem, God Save the King. Attention will be directed to features of the classroom, desks and displays. The students will be shown appropriate artefact handling techniques to protect old objects. They will be shown how sources are used to provide evidence and tell stories of the past.

Working in pairs or groups, students will explore artefacts on display, examine objects closely and be encouraged to ask questions through a variety of activity stations. These include:

- Treasure hunt – observing and identifying objects and artefacts from schooling in the past
- Tops and toys – examining and using past children's toys, games and puzzles
- Suitcase investigation – handling and examining original contents of 1960s Globite suitcases
- Jelly pads and stamp pads – reproducing a map using a jelly pad and numbers and images using rubber stamps as changing printing technologies
- Postcards from the past – examining photographs of early school children
- Tales and toasting\* – toasting a piece of bread over the open fire whilst chatting about past technologies.

\*Note – Toasting can only proceed if there are always two adult helpers in attendance at the fire, and if the weather is not too hot. The helpers cannot be the class teacher or class teachers' aide as both are needed by their class.

## Maypole dancing, drill and playground games – tennis court and asphalt areas outside

The focus of this session is on being immersed in some outdoor physical activities undertaken at school in the past.

### Maypole dancing

Displays of maypole dancing were included at special school events such as Empire Day, sports days and annual schools' displays at showgrounds. The students will hold a ribbon and skip around the maypole, accompanied by folk music, winding the colourful ribbons down the pole. Images and examples of children's clothing of the late 1800s/early 1900s will be shown at the start of the session. Girls will be invited to wear a pinafore and boys a sailor collar for the short maypole activity. Pinafores were worn by girls to protect their dress as clothing was scarce and difficult to wash.

### Dumb-bell or wand drill exercises

Standing in evenly spaced rows, and instructed using drill commands, the students will be undertake some simple wand or dumb-bell exercises that were used in schools from the 1880s through the early 1900s. Drill was intended to build fitness and instil order and discipline. Students will also march in lines as they used to at school.

### Playground games

The students will play some playground games such as:

- Fly – using sticks or timber slats. This game shows students the value of using found objects in their play.
- Skipping – using a long rope
- Bowling (rolling) hoops – using a stick or hand
- Quoits – using vintage rope quoits and stands.

## History K-10 syllabus links

### Outcomes

HT1-1 communicates an understanding of change and continuity in family life using appropriate historical terms

HT1-2 identifies and describes significant people, events, places and sites in the local community over time\*

HT1-3 describes the effects of changing technology on people's lives over time

HT1-4 demonstrates skills of historical inquiry and communication

### Present and Past Family Life

Differences and similarities between students' daily lives and life during their parents' or grandparents' childhoods, including family traditions, leisure time and communications (ACHHK030)

- Discuss similarities and differences from generation to generation, e.g. family celebrations and traditions, leisure activities and changes in technology/communication over time through a range of sources
- Compare and contrast daily life with that of parents and grandparents at the same age through stories or photographs and pose questions to ask parents/grandparents

How the present, past and future are signified by terms indicating time such as 'a long time ago', 'then and now', 'now and then', 'old and new', 'tomorrow', as well as by dates and changes that may have personal significance, such as birthdays, celebrations and seasons (ACHHK029)

- Define and use terms relating to time, sequencing objects or photographs from the past, e.g. *then* and *now*, *past* and *present*, *a long time ago*

## The Past in the Present

The impact of changing technology on people's lives (ACHHK046)

- Identify examples of changing technologies in their home or community
- Discuss the similarities and difference of technology from the past through a range of sources and sequence them over time

*\* The following content is of most relevance to local schools and also schools in communities without rich local history.*

The history of a significant person, building, site or part of the natural environment in the local community and what it reveals about the past (ACHHK030)

- Identify a significant person, building, site or part of the natural environment in the local community and discuss what they reveal about the past and why they are considered important
- Investigate an aspect of local history

The importance today of an historical site of cultural or spiritual significance; for example, a community building, a landmark, a war memorial (ACHHK045)

Students:

- identify an historical site or sites in the local community. Discuss their significance, why these sites have survived and the importance of preserving them.

## Note to teachers

Children's experiences of schooling in NSW in the past were diverse. What is represented in the NSW Schoolhouse Museum program is evidenced through primary sources but was not shared by all children in NSW.

Children's schooling experiences were impacted by the type of schools available due to remoteness, cultural heritage and abilities. For instance, Aboriginal students on Aboriginal reserves could only attend Aboriginal schools which followed a modified syllabus focusing on manual and domestic skills taught by untrained teachers, government policies allowed discrimination of Aboriginal students in public schools up to 1972 and children in isolated areas originally had access to only a basic education through half-time schools, house-to-house schools and travelling schools.

Refer to the NSW Department of Education's [Glossary of school types](#) and the links on the [History of education](#) page on our website for further information.