



STAWELL SECONDARY COLLEGE

CHINESE EXCHANGE PROGRAM



The Chinese Language Program has a long history at Stawell Secondary College, which can be traced back to 2001 and has led to Chinese becoming a popular foreign language choice for students at the school.

In 2008, Chinese as a LOTE subject was introduced to Year 7 students as part of the school curriculum and since then has grown within the school. The exchange program with three of our sister schools in China, Qijing Nationality Middle School, Yancheng Middle School and Shanghai Industrial and Commercial Foreign Languages School has run smoothly and successfully since it was established. Overall, we have hosted 10 visiting groups of students and teachers from China. The Chinese visiting students and teachers have enjoyed their stay in Stawell and our students and teachers have certainly benefited through the language and culture exchange program.

Every two years, Stawell Secondary College organizes a China Study Tour for our students to experience the culture and gain further exposure to the language. Our first China trip in 2011, was a great success and received positive feedback from both parents and students. Although Stawell has limited resources due to its geographical location, our students still demonstrate a passion for the language and aim for a high level of achievement. In 2012, three of our students from Years 9 and 10 successfully accessed the Chinese Scholarship Program and took part in a two-week exchange program in Beijing. Altogether, Stawell Secondary College students participated in eight in-country excursions (three of them were through the Victorian Education Department named 'The Victorian Young Leaders to China Program'), throughout all of the international trips, our students fully grasped the opportunity and embraced the language and culture. They were very keen to make friends, improved their Chinese language skills and explored the Chinese way of life. Moreover, Stawell Secondary College has built a positive and cooperative relationship with our sister schools in China.

Students have benefitted from a large number of in-country experiences, and this has resulted in a positive influence on the wider school community. In 2020, our Chinese program was viewed as one of the successful highlights of Stawell Secondary College through our whole school review.

Unfortunately, with the global pandemic, the exchange programs have had to pause due to the travel restrictions between China and Australia. To combat this, we started to take advantage of online platforms and tried to promote the intercultural communication via several programs. These programs not only replicated our China trips, but also related to the short-stay program we used to host annually, before the pandemic. The mutual relationships were strengthened and cultural understanding was enhanced. Below is a list of the online programs we have organised:

1. Sister school summer camp online program (2020-2022)
2. Sister school pen-pal program for Year 8 – Year 12 students (2020, 2021,2022,2023)
3. Virtual Victorian Young Leaders to China Program (2022,2023)
4. Victorian Young Leaders Online Forum (2020, 2021)

Apart from the online programs, we have organised numerous cultural incursions, Melbourne Chinatown excursions and have encouraged students to participate in Chinese language competitions, to compensate for the reduction in hands-on learning and first-hand cultural immersion opportunities.

All of these activities and the programs listed above served the following purposes and achieved positive outcomes:

1. To allow our Stawell students to communicate with people in China in a real-world context, instead of being limited to Chinese in classrooms, so they can see the practical purpose of learning the language.
2. To develop inter-cultural communication skills and global competency, which are valuable skills in a modern global, social and political environment.
3. To promote an interest and passion towards learning another language and culture.

Currently, our school is organising a 2024 school China trip as we believe in-country experience is the most important opportunity for students to make connections to what they have learned at school. Our students are very excited and looking forward to the upcoming adventure in September, 2024. Additionally, five outstanding Chinese language students from Year 9 and Year 10 have been invited to China to participate in a Chinese speaking conference in November this year for two weeks. We believe their journey will be fun, educational, and beneficial to their personal growth and language learning. We wish them good luck in their Chinese speaking events in Guangzhou and Suzhou, with their Chinese speaking partners!

Stawell has a very long history with Chinese immigrants first moving to the area during the Gold Rush of the early Nineteenth Century. Although many of the Chinese people moved on to other places at the end of the Gold Rush, the influence of the Chinese culture has remained in the area and been rejuvenated by the introduction of a successful Chinese Language Program at Stawell Secondary College. Further to this, the growing influence of China on the global economic stage has not gone unnoticed within Australia. The growth of the Chinese Language Program at Stawell Secondary College also provides an ongoing path for students to learn Chinese beyond our feeder primary schools.

Chinese Language Students Achievement:

- Stawell Secondary College Students in 2016-2019 Global Village Chinese Speaking Competition
 - 2016: 1 x First Prize
 - 2017: 1 x Second Prize, 1 x Third Prize
 - 2018: 2 x Second Prizes, 1 x Third Prize
 - 2019: 1 x First Prize, 1 x Second Prize, 1 x Third Prize
- HSK Tests
 - 3 students achieved Certificate 1 2018
 - 3 students achieved Certificate 2 2019
 - 2 students achieved Certificate 2 2022
- Hanyu Qiao (China Bridge) Chinese Competition (Senior Students)
 - 2021
 - July (Victorian State Level): Third Prize
 - 2020
 - August (Victorian State Level): 1st Place, 2 medallions of encouragement

- September (National Level): 4th Place
- October (Oceania Region Level): 1st Place
- November (Worldwide Finals): 6th place (2nd Prize)
- Year 7-9 Reading Award
 - 2022 2 x Medallion Awards, 1 x 3rd place
 - 2023 4 x Medallion Awards
- Assisting Australian students with China Scholarship Applications
 - 2018 Hangzhou University, full scholarship
 - 2019 Fudan University, full scholarship
 - 2020 Taiwan Scholarship
 - 2021 Fudan University, full scholarship
- VCE Achievement
2021 Melisa Sanders Chinese Language, Culture and Society:
Highest raw score: 49 (Premier's Award)