

The Armidale Waldorf School

Annual Report 2022



Vision Statement

The Armidale Waldorf School provides a comprehensive education from early childhood through to secondary school, that works clearly out of anthroposophy and the indications of the late Dr Rudolf Steiner, providing children and youth with a foundation for life and inspiring them toward fulfilment of their destiny. It is a school where students are educated to take their place in the world in a meaningful way for humanity, secure in their earthly existence, with their souls nourished and their creative spirits liberated.

An integral part of the School is the College of Teachers, which has the purpose, responsibility and authority to lead the School on pedagogical matters; to maintain and develop the quality of the educational programs and experiences; and to enrich the spiritual heart and purpose of the School.

The School's dynamic approach to education permeates every aspect of school life, with students, teachers, parents and friends all being recognised and valued as the unique spiritual beings that they are. The school community seeks to nourish and support this vision. The School has clear structures and processes to facilitate trust, objectivity and communication.

We empower each other with the mandate to take responsibility for the tasks identified, and to work together with an attitude of openness, honesty and trust.

We strive to make decisions through consensus, with honest and respectful discussion, and to ensure that all the voices in our school community have the opportunity to be heard.

We, the School community of students, teachers, parents and friends, interact with the world with courage and love; truth, beauty and goodness stand as an inspiration for all.



Governance and Structure of The Armidale Waldorf School

The Armidale Waldorf School Ltd is a company limited by guarantee. Its objectives include 'establishing and maintaining a preschool and a school, the latter comprising Primary and Secondary sections of the highest standard' ... and 'at all times to work out of and foster the educational philosophy and principles of the late Dr Rudolf Steiner in their application to the education of children and the training of teachers, including those that:

- a) emphasise the harmony of nature;
- b) respect the individuality of the child;
- c) foster self-determination in the child;
- d) develop the child's creative and critical abilities;
- e) stress cooperation rather than competition, and
- f) stress active involvement of learners in a wide range of educational situations.'

Governance

The Armidale Waldorf School Board is the School's and Preschool's governing body, or board. It holds financial and legal responsibility for the conduct of all matters relating to the objects of the company, including capital and human resource management, strategic planning, financial planning and oversight, approval of policies and the management of risk. The College of Teachers is established under the Constitution to hold certain educational responsibilities, especially in relation to curricular matters.

The Board receives reports from College, the Education Director and Business Manager, and has established committees from which it also receives advice. Additionally, it receives input from the School community at large, as well as class carers and parents/guardians, from time to time.

The management staff of the school consists of the Education Director and Business Manager. There are support staff in the form of a finance officer and office administrative staff.

Membership of Board, College and Committees in 2022

The Armidale Waldorf School Board

Elected: Maureen Chapman (Chair)

James Vicars, Rebecca Cawood, Rachel Mitchell (until the last AGM)

Nickie Murcell, Rex Gream,

Vicki Howell, Mattias Grasselli, Peter McClenaghan (since the last AGM)

Ex officio: Zana Clarke (Education Director), and Steve Klipin (Business Manager)

The College of Teachers

Karen Jenkins, Angela Earth, Tracey Somerville, Michelle Hollands, Zana Clarke, Kim Bizo and Belinda Nano. The role of Chair was undertaken by Michelle Hollands during 2022.

The Finance and Compliance Committee (TFCC)

Rex Gream, Peter McClenaghan, Steve Klipin, Arif Usma, Zana Clarke



Chair of Board Report

2022 in review

It is with pride and humility that I am able once again to bring you this report. 2022 has been a year of sound growth and exceptional achievements for our School. We have continued to slowly find our way out of the constrictions of an awful pandemic to be able to come together more often as a school community and celebrate our seasons and our student's achievements.

As always, I have nothing but gratitude and high praise for you all - teachers, administrators, parents, facilities staff and managers. You continue to go above and beyond - always focused on ensuring the very best experience for our students. Your care and professionalism are a credit to you all.

All of this, of course, doesn't occur in a vacuum. Zana, under your unwavering commitment and skilled leadership our School has experienced solid growth. 2023 will see the first cohort of Class 9 students taking the next steps in their Steiner education journey. It's both exciting and challenging to be taking this step forward - but being able to provide this option for our students continuing into High School is well worth it.

Managing throughout it all has been no less of a challenge, and Zana, once again you have led us carefully and calmly through yet another difficult and challenging year. The increasingly regulatory framework in which we are required to operate is as demanding as it is fluent. It requires our Management Team to be constantly aware of change, and to be able to respond quickly, while never losing sight of our purpose as a Steiner School. All of you continue to do so admirably. I truly thank you.

After missing a couple of years, it was also great to be able to again hold our Community Conversation. The importance of coming together as a school community with the Board and Management in productive, friendly and energetic conversation cannot be underestimated. Thank you to our Board Secretary, Nicki Murcell, for leading this.

If ever there was a time for us all to appreciate our responsibility for educating the leaders of the future, it is now. It is of course our College of Teachers who carry much of this by ensuring that the pedagogy of Steiner is respected and that the education we offer truly takes account of the whole child. I warmly thank Michelle Hollands as College Chair for continuing to keep our focus and for holding to, and sharing, these values.

The Board

As a Board of Directors, we have continued to work hard to ensure we meet our compliance and other regulatory responsibilities, as well as having sound business and strategic plans in place. Our Directors undertake these responsibilities in a voluntary capacity and I thank them all for their continuing support and commitment. As has been promised at previous AGMs, we have worked hard to improve our succession planning and to bring new Directors

with the skills and experience we need to ensure our school is financially stable and compliant. At the last AGM Rachel Mitchell, Rebecca Cawood and James Vicars retired in accordance with the Constitution. All were long standing Directors who contributed enormously to the School's growth, and I thank them all for their contributions. We also welcomed new Directors Vicki Howell, Peter McClenaghan and Mattias Grasselli, as well as the return of Rex Gream.

Governance and Professional Development

As we strive to ensure a professional and skills-based Directorship, we continue to draw on the services of the Association of Independent Schools and Steiner Education Australia to seek the best possible professional advice with regard to governance, financial management and Constitutional currency. We remain committed to ensuring sound practices are in place and will continue this work during 2023.

All Board Directors and senior management staff continue to ensure they undertake Governance Training as required by AIS. Directors and Senior Management also attend and participate in the annual SEA Governance, Leadership and Management (GLaM) Conference and AIS Governance Symposium. Participation in these events and training opportunities is important if we are to continue to deliver quality Steiner education in these increasingly challenging times.

Volunteers and community

Once again, due to restrictions on events and gatherings, some of the usual festivals and events were unable to take place and we've been unable to re-establish the Friends of Waldorf. That said, there are many volunteers helping to keep our school running, whether that's by taking part in working bees, or tuckshop, or camps. Again, and always – I thank you.

Thank You

Our School succeeds because of the community that surrounds and nurtures it – because you model our values of gratitude, responsibility, collaboration, inclusivity, diversity and initiative. Because you do this every day, our students are developing a true appreciation for their place in this world – for being the leaders of tomorrow. So – to all of you, the parents, friends and volunteers who bring life to the School through festivals, plays, camps and excursions – who help with craft and music, with working bees and storytelling, with tuckshop and reading programs, ... and of course, the gifted teachers who inspire and nourish the children in their care as they guide them safely to take their place in this increasingly challenging world.

You are all so greatly appreciated.

Mattias Grasselli

Director and Board Chair

College of Teachers Report 2022

The College of Teachers works with the principles of Rudolf Steiner as they relate to the stages of child development and the development of human consciousness. The College strives to deepen their understanding of these principles and apply this to our pedagogical practices.

Current members of College

Angela Earth, Lynne Beclu, Michelle Hollands, Karen Jenkins, Kim Bizo, Belinda Nano, Tracey Somerville

Artistic/Practical Activities

Part of each College meeting is devoted to an artistic activity to broaden the skills of College members. Over the past two terms, College has focussed on the following activities.

Eurythmy - Karen shared many eurythmy movement sequences and verses to be mastered and used with the children.

Copper Rod Work - We practised copper rod movement exercises to be used in classrooms as a way of developing a sense of direction, rhythm, sequencing, proprioception and balance in the children. Movement exercises such as these are useful in supporting learning and behavioural difficulties experienced by students.

Other activities included singing and wax work.

Study

Pedagogy around drawing through developmental stages - We looked at drawing and age-appropriate instruction in Steiner pedagogy and some commonly held assumptions embedded in contemporary practices.

Child study

Child study sessions were carried out to develop a deeper understanding of the child and to enliven, illuminate and clarify an approach to the child studied. College worked to bring these insights to all the students in its care.

Restorative Practices

Following the Restorative Practices PD presented by Margaret Thornsborne, College discussed ways to maintain these practices as a behaviour development response in our school. It was decided that restorative practices would be a focus of an education meeting and that content from the professional learning, in particular the Neuro-Sequential Model in Education, would be shared at each staff meeting. In this way we strived to develop a consistent response to behavioural difficulties and student engagement. A restorative practice professional development was also suggested for a staff PD day.

Environmental focus

A working group was formed to embed an environmental education focus into our curriculum.

This group organised an audit of our current curriculum to identify the environmental education teaching and learning activities that are already taking place across all six key learning areas. Dr Lisa Siegel visited the school to present a professional learning day to support the development of a framework for a whole school environmental education plan.

College is investigating involvement in the Eco-Schools Australia Program. Eco-Schools is a global sustainable schools' program and engages students in environmental education through action-based learning. The program uses a seven-step framework to guide implementation:

1. Form an Eco-Committee
2. Complete an Environmental Review
3. Create an Action Plan
4. Link to the Curriculum
5. Monitor and Evaluate
6. Inform and Involve
7. Produce an Eco Code

Environmental Decision-Making Framework

A framework was developed as a guide for environmentally responsible decision making in the school. Following discussion with the Business Manager, it was decided that the framework would be presented to the School Board for consideration and feedback. The framework arose out of the following rationale:

- Learning from the traditions of the Anaiwan people, there is a strong connection and sense of custodianship for the TAWS school site held by many staff, students, alumni and community members.
- The College has identified the environment as one of the three main foci for the three-year educational and operational plan. To this end, an environmental focus group has been working to develop an environmental program to run alongside our existing curriculum to strengthen and develop the environmental education that takes place at TAWS. Through observation and site-based activities, this program aims to develop in the students a sense of connection and custodianship for the TAWS site they will carry with them for life. This work aligns strongly with the Australian Curriculum which identifies *sustainability* as one of the three cross-curriculum priorities.

- TAWS already has a reputation in the community as an environmentally friendly school. The College would like to see this reputation strengthened so that TAWS is known as a school for environmental education. To this end, we have been investigating becoming a member of Eco Schools Australia, part of a worldwide movement supported by the Australian Government and recognised by UNESCO.
- The College feels that if such a strong impulse for environmental education and care is held pedagogically, it is essential for this impulse to be reflected in policy and decision-making too.

Extra Lesson

College discussed ways to integrate extra lesson support into the school. In response, Marianne Nichols (an extra lesson practitioner) observed classes and provided feedback to teachers regarding movement activities to support individual students as well as the class as a whole.

Class Sizes

Concerns were raised with College relating to class sizes and the ability of teachers to meet the diverse needs of students in large classes. College looked at the issue of class size through a range of perspectives including:

- The physical space required to allow movement (morning circle etc)
- Parent perceptions and reputational risk
- The experience of the child in a large class
- The ability of the teacher to differentiate and meet additional student needs
- Administration time
- Financial constraints
- The need to build class size so there are enough students to move from a composite to a single stream model

After discussion with the Education Director and Business Manager, it was decided that input and the collection of perspectives from a broader base was required before moving towards a policy in relation to class size.

Measurement Main Lesson

College discussed the introduction of a measurement main lesson into the stage 1 curriculum. Traditionally, measurement is a focus in the class 3 curriculum. After consideration it was felt that the introduction of informal measurement in stage 1 would not undermine the class 3 main lesson but would form a foundation for the more in depth focus in Class 3. The Class 3 main lesson would then have more time to focus on the historical development of measurement as well as different standardised units of measurement.

Three-year Pedagogical Plan

College reviewed the progress made so far in light of the Pedagogical 3-year Plan. The discussion focussed on the schools Reconciliation Action Plan, LNAP, Wellbeing (Restorative Justice and trauma informed approaches) and environmental education.

Review of the Educational and Operation Plan for 2023

College members provided feedback to the Business Manager regarding the Educational and Operation Plan for 2023. Focal points were:

- The establishment of a leadership team and its relation to the role of the College
- Possible funding for the development of an environmental education curriculum

Michelle Hollands

College Chair



Education Director Report

Overview

2022 was a year of returning to many ways of working and being from pre-covid times. We enjoyed returning to our termly festivals, our camps and having parents on site again participating in parent teacher meetings, class meetings, informative talks and music concerts. As a community we welcomed these opportunities to reconnect, rediscover and look at our community anew.

In February, we started the year with 126 students from Kindergarten to Class 8 and we retained similar numbers at August census. Our classes were stand-alone Kindergarten, Class 1, Class 2, Class 3, Class 4, and composite Class 5/6, and Class 7/8. During the year, primary class sizes ranged from 12-29. Boongaiai Preschool began at 63% capacity and reached 92% capacity in Term 4. Playtime ran two sessions each week throughout the year.

The focus for 2022 was in the following key areas:

- Working towards the addition of Year 9 and 10
 - Work toward development of curriculum and facilities to cater for expansion to Class 9/10 in 2023
 - Complete the new building, providing 2 new rooms including a science lab for the high school
 - Increase enrolments in the high school to build numbers for introduction of 9/10 in 2023
- Continued participation in the Phase 2 Numeracy and Literacy Action Plan, funded by the NSW Government, to improve student outcomes in numeracy and literacy in the early years
- Continuation of Student Learning Assistants across all classes to assist students to access the curriculum
- Keeping our Reconciliation Action Plan at the forefront of everything we do
- Excellence in Teaching through increased resources and professional development

Continuing our work towards Class 9/10

Throughout 2022 we watched the new building take shape and saw it completed ahead of schedule in November. We formed a year 9 working group of staff and parents in the middle part of the year to prepare the 2023 year 9 offering. The NESA curriculum, including *initial* registration for year 9 and *initial* accreditation for ROSA had been granted in 2021. In 2022 we further developed the year 9 and 10 elective offering and staff recruitment.

Community Conversation

We held our first community conversation after 2 years of recess due to Covid. It was a small event, held at the Ex-Services Club but a very productive one of sharing what the school was doing well and what we could do better in relation to the 5 goals from our strategic plan.

Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

NAIDOC celebrations in September 2022 involved all staff and students, with a variety of activities celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history. Storytelling and dance, and a traditional smoking ceremony were enjoyed by all.

Review and Planning meetings

During Term 3, all staff were involved in Review and Planning meetings around how each person was travelling and in forward planning for 2023. Reviews focussed on the key tasks (derived from the position descriptions), identifying any professional development needs, and considering any possible changes to the position description. This process also led into the development of the following year's budget.

EARLY CHILDHOOD (Playtime and Preschool)

Playtime: Coordinated by Nadia Waters, Playtime continued to grow in popularity with full numbers and an extensive waiting list. This prompted discussions on whether to extend to a third day, or other strategies to offer this wonderful resource to more families.

Preschool:

Enrolments 2022

Term 1 – 63%

Term 2 – 70%

Term 3 – 80%

Term 4 – 92%

Enrolments steadily increased over the year and expressions of interest for future enrolments were much higher than previous years, resulting in a healthy start for preschool for 2023. Of the children who were Kindergarten age for 2023, 7 enrolled in TAWS.

PRIMARY and HIGH SCHOOL (Class K-8)

Programs and Activities for 2022

The High School. Class 7/8 combined to make a class of 26. In both Classes 7 and 8, the teachers provide students with new perspectives. They begin to look at the world in new

ways. Teachers work to bring the adolescent to individual judgement, and gradually towards the consciousness of social responsibility.

Student Support: The Student Support team continued to support student learning, both inside and outside the classroom. The team involves a total of 9 staff including Student Learning Assistants. Student support includes learning support and student wellbeing. In order to determine needs in this area, we continued with whole-school screening for all students at the beginning and again at the mid-point of each year. These reviews inform teaching practice while also focusing attention on any additional support that might be needed to strengthen student learning and engagement. We continued to work with the AIS Phase 2 Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan, funded by the NSW Government, for Kindergarten and Class 1 and 2, with other teachers taking part in the professional development on specific teaching. Learning Support also received many additional resources towards meeting the needs of the students.

Student Learning Assistants: Our Student Learning Assistants are coordinated by Michelle Hollands and work with students from Kindergarten to Class 7/8 to support the student learning in and outside the classroom. The Student Learning Assistants worked together as part of the Learning Support team to provide access to the curriculum for all students.

MUSIC

In the classroom: The Education Director taught the high school students' music while we continued to advertise for a part-time music teacher for the rest of the school.

String Programme: As part of our curriculum, Class 3 students began the violin or cello while Class 4 and 5 students continued to develop their skills. The class 4 string ensemble, the 'Viking Ensemble,' played together each week to experience playing in a group, and as a complement to their weekly individual lessons. Fiddlers Club also continued Monday afternoons for more confident players.

Fiddlers Club: 'Fiddlers Club' is made up of musicians from Class 4-8. They often play at our festivals and assemblies. Joanna leads the group, covering a wide repertoire.

Woodwind and Brass Programme: This year our Woodwind and Brass class continued running after school. Despite the many Covid restrictions the school had to manage, we were able to hold an internal concert for all our musicians so that everyone could have an opportunity to perform for others.

French: Classes from K-8 enjoyed weekly French lessons under the guidance of Michelle Le Gall, where the younger students learnt basic French through song and games.

Class 1 and 2 looked at the fairy tales of Goldilocks and the Three Bears, The Three Billy Goats Gruff, The Giant Turnip and Little Red Riding Hood. Students learnt vocabulary associated with each story and performed mini plays to their classmates.

Class 3/4 looked at school, food and weather, ending the term with the story of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.

Class 5/6 studied how to describe their school life, clothing and food.

Class 7 looked at describing themselves, greetings, describing their school day, describing family members and friends and special events.

Class 8 learnt how to tell the time in French, describe pets, and how to describe family and friends. Class 8 also completed a mini main lesson on the French Revolution and how it influenced the world we live in today.

Gardening: Our large vegetable garden is tended by the classes under Woody's (Belinda Nano) guidance, with each student spending regular time weeding, making compost, planting, and harvesting. The produce is then used in our Friday Tuckshop, or Class cooking.

Craft: Craft is a wholesome way of learning practical skills to create something both useful and beautiful to treasure forever. The creative process of craft has a magical way of deepening learning.

Class 1 • hand-sewn names onto chair bags • woven recorder bags in a rainbow pattern

Class 2 • introduction to knitting • embroidered tuckshop bags

Class 3/4 • cross stitched fountain pen pouch • leather rune pouch and painted rune stones
• knitted Easter rabbit

Class 5/6 • leather compass pouch • bone and wood carving

Class 7/8 • needle felting • wooden box

Sport Programs/Activities: As a school we offer a holistic approach to education based on what is developmentally appropriate for each child. Our games and sporting events are based on cooperation and participation, rather than competition and a focus on winning:

- **Bush Walks** – Primary students participated in bush walks, usually to the pine forest. These build students' stamina and resourcefulness, while allowing the teacher to cement the class as a group (important for extended camps).
- **Friday Games** – Every Friday afternoon students from Classes 1 to 6 came together to play physical games, which incorporated strategy, strength, and coordination. All students need to cooperate if the game is to be a success, and so older students teach and help the younger students in how best to play the games, while the younger students look up to and imitate the skills of the older students.
- **Swimming lessons** – The school successfully applied for and received grants from Sporting schools Australia, which gave the opportunity to support swimming lessons for classes 1 – 6. This was a welcome addition to the sport opportunities and the children's swimming skills improved significantly.
- **Swimming Carnival** – During Term 1, Classes 1 to 8 participated in a swimming carnival. The weather was cool and so the day was shortened, and this worked particularly well for the younger students. Only Class 3 and upward joined the swimming races, while Class 1 and 2 played organised games and swam with their

teacher and helpers. They also watched the older students and teachers in the big pool, preparing them for the time when they too will be developmentally ready to join the races.

- **Cross Country** – Due to bad weather, this annual event was cancelled again this year.
- **Athletics Carnival** – held on the last day of Term 3, students took to the track and field at Charleston Willows Reserve, participating in games and athletic events. Carnivals such as this provide opportunities for students to test their physical skills, and to hone social skills of co-operation and teamwork.

School Fair: The Annual Spring Fair was the biggest fundraiser for the school in 2022. Since the *Friends of Waldorf* group had not been very active during the Covid restrictions, the Spring Fair attracted a lot of community and family involvement, culminating in an enjoyable and successful event.

The School Camp Program: This continues to be a very popular part of our curriculum, where students are encouraged to find identity, meaning and purpose in life by forming connections with community and the natural world. Extended camps promote environmental ethics, appreciation of nature, and provide opportunities to develop values, knowledge, and new skills through the exploration of unique geographical locations and diverse environments. Our camps create a platform where stories can be told and heard, where students learn about themselves and others and their responsibility to each other. They improve social skills, build self-confidence and resilience, and experience a variety of circumstances directly related to that particular environment. The camp experience transforms students in positive ways, providing moments of reflection, observation, and exploration of ideas and experiences that can only be found in nature.

Classes 1 and 2 each had a sleepover at school during the year.

Class 2 also had a camp at Hungry Head in Term 4.

Class 3/4 camped at Port Macquarie in Term 3.

Class 5/6 camped in Term 1 and then travelled to Lake Keepit in Term 4.

Class 7/8 camped at Warrumbungle National Park in Term 1 and travelled to Sydney in Term 3.

Class Plays - Our class plays give teachers many chances to build the social strength of their class; the plays often also reinforce aspects of the curriculum. Plays in a Waldorf school are called “pedagogical” dramas. They aid the class teacher in developing skill and capacity in students, strengthening the sense of interdependence in the whole class, and brightening the creativity of the class through drama.

- Class 1 and 2 did *Briar Rose*, which was performed in-house at the end of Term 3
- The Class 3/4 play was about the story of Moses, performed at the end of Term 4
- Class 5/6 performed the story of *Persephone* in Term 3

- Class 7/8 performed Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the end of the year.

Student Wellbeing Programme: The school's Wellbeing Co-ordinator worked with students across the school in conjunction with class teachers and the Education Director.

Teachers and all staff professional learning. The staff had many opportunities to engage with current practice around Professional Learning, including a day with AIS on *Schools, culture and child protection*, a day on *Environmental Education* led by Dr Lisa Siegel, and *The Art of Education Creative Disciplines* including ceramics, extra lesson and biography work.

Library: Our library not only provides resources for our students and community but is a much-used space for meetings, plays and other small classes.

Tuck Shop: Often the tuckshop menu is created from produce grown in our own vegetable garden. This activity continued to provide wholesome food on Fridays with the help of parents and classes. In 2022 this was not offered every week as we worked to rebuild our capacity to offer this service after Covid.



Festivals...times for the whole community: Festivals are an integral part of Steiner education and an important element in the rhythm of the year. Our schools' seasonal festivals are an enriching part of the school's cultural and community life.

They combine the social warmth of celebration with activities of an artistic, creative, and thought-provoking nature that connect with the cycles of the seasons and establish a yearly rhythm for our children. Through the sharing of stories, food, songs, and activities linked to the season, we express with beauty and reverence the season of the moment.

Term 1 We celebrated the change of seasons with the Autumn Festival at the end of term.

Term 2 saw the beautiful and magical display of the Winter Festival on Tuesday 21st June, which is as close as possible to the longest night of the year!

Term 3 The traditional Spring Festival returned in September 2022, with a trip to Mount Yarrowyck, a shared picnic, some spring planting, and a shared morning tea with our grandparents.

Term 4 The Summer Festival was held at school at the very end of the year, with the community coming together to sing Christmas carols and sharing an afternoon tea.

Community Engagement and Education.

Working Bees: In a normal school year, we hold working bees once per term to contribute to tasks that are important to the school's maintenance and educational support. Participation offers the opportunity to contribute to the warmth and sense of place that parents feel for the campus and school community.

Craft Group: The aim of the group is to create beautiful handmade items to sell at our November Spring Fair, while also strengthening social opportunities within the school community. Craft skills are shared and learnt together in a happy, safe environment. We have not recommenced the craft group since the beginning of Covid. However, we will continue our work towards this in 2023 as this is a wonderful social and productive community-focused group.

External Compliance

NAPLAN

We had a total of 18 students sitting NAPLAN this year. Twelve from class 3, one from class 5 and five from class 7.

NCCD

(National Consistent Collection of Data) The school competed its yearly submission entering data on disabilities and student's needs.

Child Protection

All staff undertook child protection training during the year in the form of in-person PD day with the Association of Independent Schools.

Report Writing

The Armidale Waldorf School sends out 2 formal reports to parents; one mid-year and one at the end of the year. This is supplemented by parent-teacher meetings following these reports.

Governance Training

Management and directors completed AIS Independent Schools Governance online modules as required.

Conclusion

2022 saw The Armidale Waldorf School move ever closer to meeting its goal to be in a position to offer year 9 in 2023, and year 10 in 2024. In many ways, coming out of Covid in the 2022 year was like waking from a long sleep where we all started engaging, talking and sharing again as a community, although tentatively at first. The children responded so positively to this change as they navigated the balance of inner and outer worlds and began to settle into the essential rhythms and routines of school, family and community life post-Covid.

Our teaching and educational support staff did an amazing job of supporting students back into the day-to-day school routine, giving extra support and encouragement to those who needed it. We all acknowledge and have deep gratitude for the traditional lands on which we work, learn and play – the cultural richness that surrounds us and, in particular, the beautiful bush setting that nourishes the children, the adults guiding them and the school community.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Maureen Chapman (Board Chair), and the Board, for their guidance and support; Steve Klipin for his ongoing dedication to developing our school's leadership and professional expectations of all staff; the College of Teachers for their commitment to inner work, and their work with child study; all the teaching staff for their dedication to teaching and love of the children; the administration staff for their behind-the-scenes support of the children, parents/carers, teachers and Management team.

As one year closes, and another about to begin, I acknowledge and appreciate with sincerity the strengths and gifts each one brings to our school community. It is the children, the parents and carers, the teachers, the support staff, and the Board all working together that allows the school to continue to grow, meet the challenges presented and provide the richness of a Steiner education - for all the children in our care now and into the future.

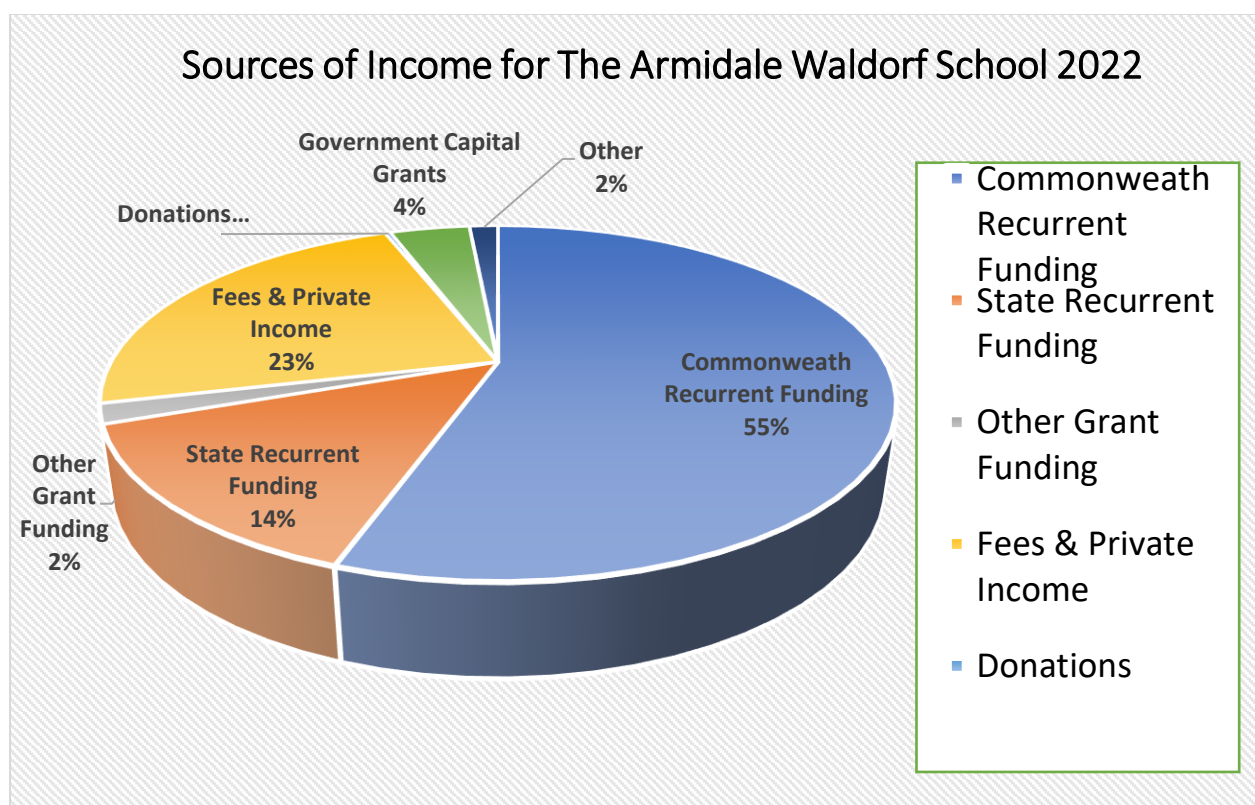
Zana Clarke,

Education Director

Summary of Financial Information 2022

The operation of The Armidale Waldorf School is dependent on funding from the Federal and State governments. This funding is calculated on a per-student basis and therefore our student numbers are critical to the school's financial viability. The school fees paid by parents are also a vital component of our operational budget.

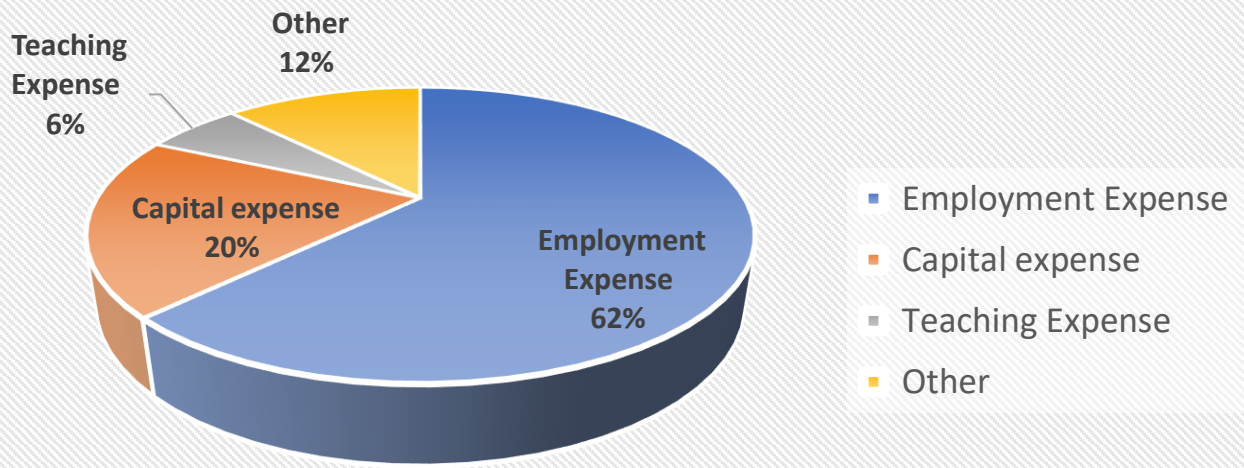
To remain a low fee-paying school, it is essential that our parent body agree to support our school by attending regular working bees or alternatively, making an additional financial contribution in lieu and ensuring prompt payment of school fees, levies and excursion costs. The overall positive financial result was achieved due to increased enrolment, careful management of expenditure and a considerable and welcome bequest. The school maintains provisions for staff annual leave and long service leave.



New Building: In 2022 the school saw the commencement of construction, its completion and operational use of the year 9/10 building following authorisation from the Armidale Regional Council.

Information Technology: The school continues to develop a digital road map to deliver education and manage the information within the school. Apple Ipad's were introduced for year 7, 8 and 9 students.

The Armidale Waldorf School Expenditure for 2022



Boongaiai Preschool Report – A Review of 2022

In 2022, Boongaiai Preschool had a successful year under the co-leadership of Rosy McGrath and Khalida Khan and a small team of dedicated support staff. The preschool continued to provide a warm and nurturing environment for children while strengthening community connections and building positive relationships with families and the wider community. The staffing arrangements were successful, ensuring continuity and connection for the families. In term 3, the preschool had two excellent applicants for the dedicated traineeship role, specifically seeking a person of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background. One applicant was selected for the position, while the other expressed interest in working as a casual staff member.

Professional Development:

During the winter break, the staff participated in the Vital Years Online Conference, *The Essentials of Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education: learning from the Past, Embracing the Present, & Unfolding the Future*. This conference offered a valuable opportunity for both new and established staff members to delve deeper into the principles of Steiner Early Childhood Education. Although the online format presented challenges, the staff provided positive feedback. The talks during the conference sparked conversations about the Anthroposophical approach, improved understanding of child development and the 12 senses, and these insights were incorporated into the faculty meetings. The staff hopes to return to face-to-face conferences in the future.

Community Engagement:

Boongaiai Preschool actively engaged with the wider community throughout the year. The preschool established a pen pal program with another preschool in Armidale, fostering connections between the children. Additionally, the children enjoyed visiting the big school library and were delighted by a storyteller's visit. The preschool also participated in NAIDOC day festivities, embracing Indigenous culture. Furthermore, the return to parent's inclusion in the festivals and spring fair provided opportunities to strengthen community bonds.

Promotion:

In term 2, Boongaiai Preschool ran a radio ad to promote the experience morning, which was well received with 12 families attending, many of which continued on to enrol or be added to the waiting list. The preschool also created an Instagram account, which has been a successful platform for sharing their activities and connecting with other Steiner preschools and community members. The preschool's Instagram account has received positive feedback and adding photos to the Boongaiai Preschool Google Maps page, as well as updating the search engine optimisation, has increased inquiries from people who found us through online searches.

Enrolments:

There were some changes in student enrolments throughout the year, with families leaving and others enrolling. It is important to note that all families who withdrew did so for reasons unrelated to their satisfaction with Boongaiai Preschool. They expressed gratitude and had

positive experiences during their time at the preschool. Boongaiai enrolments for the next year showed remarkable improvement, with confirmed numbers at 72% capacity. With additional enrolment forms awaiting return, this figure will increase to 84%. This is a notable increase compared to the previous year's capacity of 58% at the start of term 1.

Department of Education Spot Check:

During term 2, Boongaiai Preschool underwent a spot check by the Department of Education. The outcome was positive, with the review covering policies, procedures, enrolments, and medical information. As part of the check, the preschool had the opportunity to review evacuation procedures, resulting in updated emergency risk assessments and improved drill conduct. The preschool successfully met the compliance guidelines, ensuring a safe and secure environment for the children.

Funding:

Boongaiai Preschool received funding for three children through the Disability and Inclusion Program this term. However, their application for the loft project grant was unsuccessful as it did not meet the access criteria. We received valuable feedback from the Department of Education, which provides confidence that future grant applications for learning environments will have a successful outcome.

In conclusion, 2022 was a successful year for Boongaiai Preschool. The dedicated staff provided a nurturing environment for the children, while maintaining strong connections with families and the wider community. The professional development opportunities enhanced the staff's understanding of Steiner Early Childhood Education. Active community engagement and promotional efforts helped strengthen connections and attract new enrolments. The preschool experienced an increase in enrolments for the next year, reaching a notable capacity level. The spot check from the Department of Education resulted in positive outcomes and improved safety measures. Despite an unsuccessful grant application, valuable feedback was received, providing opportunities for future success in securing funding.



The Grace Newberry-Dupé Therapeutic Education Trust Gracie's Gift Report

Gracie's Gift is an independent trust established in memory of Grace Newberry-Dupé, who arrived with her identical twin sister Isabella on 1st March, 1999 and was, in terms of mainstream thinking, considered to be profoundly disabled.

Grace had not responded during attempts at mainstream 'early intervention' programs, but when enrolled at Boongaiai Preschool she truly embraced the activities presented to her. Nurtured by the gentle rhythm which enfolds the children at Boongaiai and the inherently therapeutic nature of the curriculum, she was freed from expectation and enabled to give of her unique gift.

Gracie passed away in July 2003, and this fund was set up out of a strong desire to ensure that no child should be denied an opportunity to fully access the therapeutic curriculum provided by The Armidale Waldorf School and Steiner curriculum.

Children requiring additional therapeutic support will be referred to the fund via the Class teacher and/or a treating Specialist in consultation with the child's parent/guardian.

Tax-deductible donations to Gracie's Gift are gratefully accepted via the Armidale Waldorf School's website.

