

# 2022 Annual Report



Photo: School Photo



**PORT MACQUARIE**

**Steiner School**



# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>Mission Statement and Core Values</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>A Message from the Board Chair</b>	<b>Page 4</b>
<b>A Report from the Education Director</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>Faculty Report – Kindergarten</b>	<b>Page 6</b>
<b>Faculty Report – Primary, Class 1 and 2/3 Composite</b>	<b>Page 6</b>
<b>Student Activities in 2022</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>Parent Education Offered in 2022</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>School Satisfaction</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility</b>	<b>Page 8</b>
<b>Teacher Accreditation Status</b>	<b>Page 8</b>
<b>Teacher Professional Learning</b>	<b>Page 8</b>
<b>Workforce Composition</b>	<b>Page 8</b>
<b>Student Attendance</b>	<b>Page 9</b>
<b>School Policies and Procedures</b>	<b>Page 10</b>
<b>Policy Development</b>	<b>Page 11</b>
<b>Policy Changes in 2022</b>	<b>Page 11</b>
<b>Financial Report</b>	<b>Page 12</b>
<b>Looking Back on the Previous Year</b>	<b>Page 13</b>
<b>Looking Forward to Priority Areas of Improvement and Development</b>	<b>Page 13</b>



## Introduction

Welcome readers to Port Macquarie Steiner School's 2022 Annual Report.

Port Macquarie Steiner School is an associate member of Steiner Education Australia and the NSW Association of Independent Schools. Our school holds NESA registration to offer classes from kindergarten to class 5. The school plans to progress NESA registration one year level at a time.

It is our aim to instil in our children a love of learning and encourage them to take an active role in their education. We nourish the children in our school and enrich our community through Steiner education in a way that is relevant and meaningful in today's world.

## Mission Statement

*To create a community-centred, Steiner education-based school for the Port Macquarie region, which fosters a holistic education for our children and a valuable, ethical, nurturing resource for our community.*

## Our Core Values

- Education which nurtures the head, the heart, and the hands
- Social relationships as a means for connection, inclusion, trust, and meaningful learning
- Art, creativity, and imagination as an integral part of the learning process to cultivate self-motivated free thinkers who are equipped to meet the challenges of the future
- Valuing whole-life-learning and actively supporting learning for parents, families, and our community as well as for the children
- Inclusiveness as opposed to exclusiveness
- Valuing community and the importance of skills and human contribution before economic value
- Education should be accessible to all, regardless of social, cultural, or economic background
- Supporting the long-term study and experience of the natural environment in order to deeply connect to ourselves, one another, and the world as a whole
- Recognising that the actions and thoughts of each individual impact the health of our community, and then our planet
- Festivals to celebrate the change of seasons, the natural rhythms of the earth and the community, and to experience reverence and gratitude for the natural cycles of life





## A Message from the Board Chair

The 2022 School year began in the wettest summer for many years. There were many challenges besides the weather but as with every other year at our school, Stephen, Mel and the teaching and admin team welcomed new students into Kindergarten and returning and new students in Primary.

The Board focused a great deal of our time on working with the Town Planner engaged to support us through the process of lodging the Development Application for the Thrumster Campus on John Oxley Drive, Port Macquarie.

On March 11, 2022, we were delighted to receive the news that our Block Grant Application was successful.

By mid-April, Architect Bronwyn Belmore had the CAD work completed and the concept was now (albeit two dimensional) becoming real building, pathways, stairways and even a lift. And still, plenty of trees. Bronwyn's design hugs the available space, protecting as many trees as possible.

Autumn was celebrated with a festival and in the school newsletter, there were wonderful pictures and updates for those of us a bit removed from the classroom.

In May, Town Planner Scott Marchant advised that at the Pre-Lodgement meeting with Council was positive – no major impediments identified. So, in September, the Board put together information sessions for parents on the development and these proved to be well received by the parents who attended.

In June at the AGM, we had two new Directors elected Andy King and Rob Lutz. Both brought a wealth of experience from differing areas, but areas welcome on this Board and what was coming up for us. Andy is a lawyer and educator; Rob has executive level experience in leadership and most importantly for us Project Management in a relevant field.

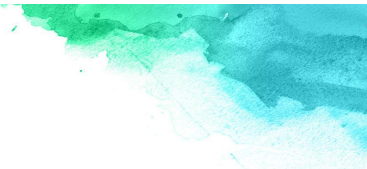
As the year progressed there was more work towards the lodgement of the DA. We engaged Carolyn Tallents as Landscape Architect, to provide the remaining site plans Council require. Her concept was perfect – inspired, simple and respectful of the landscape that exists on the block.

The school secured the block of land at the rear of our block to expand the playground area for the children making the plan to go to Class 5 realistic and achievable.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of October 2022 Scott advised the Board that he had lodged the DA. It was expected that it would take around 6 months before approval is to be granted.

Towards the end of the year the Board looked back on the journey and reflected on the fact that we had indeed been building our abilities to work collegially to take on with confidence what is coming toward us in 2023. In December we were given the opportunity to undertake further Governance Training with Leaders and Board members of Port Macquarie Community College. When asked to reflect on what were our strengths as a Board, a strong shared purpose and a commitment to seeing the school thrive and grow was determined.

We would like to acknowledge and thank all the staff for their skills, talents and commitment which ensured that all our students had the opportunity to experience the richness Steiner Education.



We acknowledged the work of the school leaders Mel and Stephen for their work in supporting and enabling all the successes of the school. And of course, meeting all the challenges. We acknowledge also Leanne for her efficient and friendly assistance with aspects of our work.

Thank you to Alanna, Andy, Cheryl and Rob for what you bring and your commitment to the Board work.

And as we acknowledge every year, we thank the parents and carers who put their trust in all of us who have a role to play in bringing Steiner Education to the children.

**Ruth Gallagher – Board Chair**

## **A Report from the Education Director**

Stephen Campbell held the position of Education Director. Mel Ayriss held the position of Manager Finance and Operations initially, her position being changed to Business Manager part-way through the year. This position, along with the Education Director position, formed the school's leadership model.

A number of school community meetings were held throughout the year to outline the work of the School Building Committee at various stages and to keep the school interest groups informed of progress along the way.

The school submitted a Block Grant Application in April 2022 for capital funding to support the stage 1 project and proceeded to prepare the application for a concept DA for stages 1 and 2 with full approval for Stage 1.

During the year the school received initial NESA registration for Class 5 until Dec 2023.

During the year a promotional video was created by Cloudherd Film Co.

The year ended with a Christmas festival where the whole school community came together in a wonderful way to finish the term and the year.

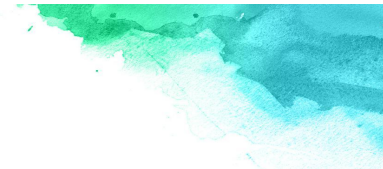
**Stephen Campbell – Education Director**

## **Faculty Report – Kindergarten**

The kindergarten teacher in 2022 was Jodee Swan-Hicks. The class explored all the stages of the Early Stage One Outcomes of the NESA curriculum, through the context of the Steiner curriculum.

The year allowed the children many opportunities to work with the arts: painting, drawing, handcrafts, woodwork, storytelling, speech, and drama. As well as being engaged in daily domestic activities such as cooking and setting the table for meals.

The curriculum is in the rhythm with the seasons around us, and the songs, poems, verses, music, festivals and weekly bushwalks all provide a strong connection to the natural world. The seasonal gardening activities also help the children to connect to the seasons, the natural environment, and to work with meeting the outcomes of Key Learning Areas.



In the Steiner curriculum many opportunities are provided for artistic expression. Each day beginning with a morning circle, allowing time for songs, movement, clapping games, counting games, verses, and poetry. Each day the children are offered time for unstructured creative play, where they can create their own stories, retell a story they have heard at story time and relate and communicate with their peers.

#### Student Activities in the 2022 Kindergarten class

- Regular cooking experiences, such as making bread, using a roller press to press groats into oats, vegetable soup, squeezing fresh juices
- Regular artistic and handcraft lessons
- Woodworking activities
- Early numeracy and literacy skills
- Observing the day, the week, the year
- Candle making
- Mid-winter spiral and lantern walk
- Weekly bushwalking to Kooloongbung Creek Nature Reserve
- School Photos
- Weekly gardening in the kindergarten garden and veggie plot
- Eyesight Health check with Community Health

Jodee Swan-Hicks – Kindergarten Teacher

### Faculty Report – Primary, Class 1/2 and 3/4 Composite

Our school year began with our new class of 11 children entering Kindergarten with their teacher, Jodee Swan-Hicks, and assistant Danielle Tattersall.

In August 2022, playgroup was re-established and held on school grounds after 2 years of being inactive. The playgroup, facilitated by Arona Gibbons was very well attended by 14 local families and this brought a great energy to the school.

In 2022 the school had two primary classes, a composite Class 1&2 and a composite Class 3&4.

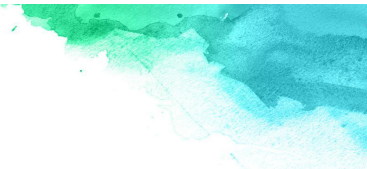
Class 1&2 consisted of 10 children in Class One and 10 children in Class Two, with their newly appointed Class teacher, Kate Barsby, with Rachel Somers assistant.

Class 3&4 consisted of 10 Class Three and 5 Class Four students, taught by Lorelei Wainiqolo for terms 1-3 and taught by Sally McDowell and Judi Costanza in term 4.

Throughout the cooler months the classes proudly grew most of the vegetables and herbs to be used in the soup they made in their classes. It was wonderful to see the cycle from the planting to the table being fully recognised and then the children consciously planting to enable the cycle to continue.

Our Mid-Winter Festival took place at the Guides hall in Port Macquarie with parents and families joining in the festivities. The children thoroughly enjoyed every aspect and were able to prepare their hand-dipped candles and lanterns prior to the festival and parade with them on the day.

A weekly strings program was introduced with class 3 commencing violin. The children have thoroughly enjoyed this addition to the curriculum and many thanks to the Coffs Harbour Conservatorium of Music for making this possible at our school.



At the beginning of term 4 the community gathered for our Spring Festival, with maypole dancing and “Old-fashioned games”.

The year finished with our Christmas festival, and it was a delight to see the children, parents, staff and friends of the school all able to gather together in a wonderful way to finish what had been a challenging year all-round.

**Stephen Campbell – Education Director**

## **Student activities in 2022**

- Seasonal festivals – the Community Lantern Festival was not held in 2022, but the Autumn Festival, Mid-Winter Festival, Spring Festival and Christmas Festivals brought much pleasure and a sense of continuity in the rhythms of the year.
- Cooking, gardening
- Woodwork projects
- Handcrafts and arts program
- Music – singing, recorder and Violin
- Seasonal activities such as making hand-dipped beeswax candles, lantern making, fabric dying

## **Parent Education Offered in 2022**

During 2022 we were able to have visits from some individuals of great experience in Steiner Education who shared with both parents and teachers alike, their knowledge and experience. These workshops and talks were inspirational, practical, and engaging to help parents connect with some of the many aspects of Steiner education.

- Virginia Moller – head of Steiner Education Australia - talked to staff and parents about what Steiner Education provides in the modern world
- Gail Sprott – a highly experienced Kindergarten teacher – worked extensively with Jodee and Danielle to further enrich the Kindy curriculum
- There were Class Parent evenings every term at which the teachers explained the upcoming main lessons and curriculum

## **School Satisfaction**

The school published regular newsletters and bulletins to keep parents and the community updated. The school remained operational for and continued to meet the needs of students and families.

The school continued to hold community meetings to discuss properties and plans that were being considered to update the school community and engage feedback.

## **Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility**

The school has a strong focus on respecting and caring for the natural world and this is embedded into all areas of the curriculum. For young children, the focus is on caring for their immediate surroundings and over time, the children come to understand their place in the world. There is also a strong emphasis on social responsibility in our school.

Through the work of the curriculum and the seasonal festivals, the children strengthen their connection to and respect for the earth. Each morning the children and teachers recite a verse to acknowledge the traditional owners and wisdom keepers of the land. This is very natural for children, and they have a great curiosity about our natural history.

### Teacher Accreditation Status

Level of NESA Accreditation in 2022	Number of Teachers
Conditional	
Provisional	1
Proficient Teacher	5
Highly Accomplished Lead Teacher	

### Teacher Professional Learning

- Glenaeon Teacher Training Intensive was attended by the Class 1/2 teacher (remotely)
- Mentor sessions for Class 1/2 and Class 3/4 teachers with Education Director
- Mentor sessions for Kindergarten teacher with Gail Spratt

The staff and teachers commenced the practice of child study and faculty meetings.

### Workforce Composition

Staff	Position	Load
Stephen Campbell	Education Director	0.8FTE
Mel Ayriss	Business Manager	1.0FTE
Lorelei Wainiqolo	Class 3/4 Teacher	1.0FTE
Kate Barsby	Class 1/2 Teacher	0.8FTE
Jodee Swan-Hicks	Kindergarten Teacher	1.0FTE
Kylie Ross	Specialist Teacher	0.2FTE
Rachel Somers	Teacher Assistant	0.8FTE
Danielle Tattersall	Teacher Assistant	0.8FTE
Leanne Leech	Administration Officer	0.8FTE
Judith Rumble	Cleaner	0.3FTE

### Student Attendance



In total, at the end of 2022 we had 42 students in the school. The average student attendance rate in 2022 was 85.4%.

## Student Numbers

Student Population for 2022	
Kindergarten	11
Class 1/2	17
Class 3/4	14

## Student Attendance Rates

Student Attendance for 2022	
Kindergarten	88.6%
Class 1/2	86.2%
Class 3/4	81.7%

## School Policies and Procedures

### Enrolment Policy

The school's enrolment policy is as follows:

#### INTRODUCTION

All applications received by the school will be processed in the order they are received. To maintain their enrolment, once enrolled, students are expected to act consistently with the school's ethos and comply with the conditions and terms of enrolment. Parents and guardians are also expected to be supportive of the ethos of the school.

#### POLICY

##### 1. Enrolment

Clear enrolment procedures are in place for the enrolment of students into the appropriate classes. These are outlined below in the Procedures section of this document. All Enrolment Application Forms will be processed as per these procedures and in order of receipt.

Students enrolling for the first time into Kindergarten will be five years of age on or before July 31 of the year preceding full-time Kindergarten entry.

When an enrolment application is received, consideration is given to:

- the applicant's support for the ethos of the school;
- siblings already attending the school;
- the educational needs of the students already attending each class;
- the school's ability to meet the needs of the student; and
- other criteria determined by the school.

All of these points are considered and none of the above, by itself, is a determining factor.

The following documentation must be included to support an Enrolment Application Form:

- a copy of the child's Birth Certificate;
- a copy of the child's latest School Report (if applicable);
- copies of educational and or medical assessment reports where relevant; and
- copies of Family Court Orders or Parenting Plans if applicable.

A photograph of the child for identification purposes is also requested.

The school acts in accordance with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)* and will consider enrolment of all students who apply.

Where a student has a disability, it is important that the parents or guardians provide accurate and up to date information to the school and for the school and parents or guardians to go through the Collaborative Planning Process to ensure positive outcomes for the student. Failure to accurately complete all sections of the Enrolment Application Form and provide all relevant information may result in the school's inability to accommodate a child's needs any may affect the child's continued enrolment.

Communication between the school and parents or guardians is very important and as such it is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to inform the school of any change of address, telephone numbers or email as soon as it is known.

In order to assist parents or guardians to make a decision regarding their child's education at our school we offer all prospective parents an invitation to attend a school tour held by arrangement throughout the year.

## **2. Fees and Charges**

Parents and guardians will be made fully aware of the financial requirements of the school, prior to enrolling their child. Continuing enrolment is subject to the satisfactory payment of all school fees and charges as per our Fee Schedule and Enrolment Contract.

For new families to the school, the first term's fees and charges are to be paid prior to the student's first day at school. For families with children already enrolled in the school, the required Fees, consolidated charges and other charges for the newly enrolled child will be added to the existing account and invoiced accordingly.

When bursaries are available, parents and guardians are welcome to complete the Bursary Application Form in order to be considered for a bursary. Information collected on this form is subject to the school's Privacy Policy.

### **3. Enrolment Contract and Acceptance of Placement**

The Enrolment Contract is to be completed by all prospective families wishing to enrol their child/ren at the school. This document outlines the agreement between the school and the family. Where applicable, the Enrolment Contract is to be signed by both parents or by both guardians. An additional, separate Enrolment Contract is to be completed and signed by any third party responsible for paying school fees.

The Acceptance of Placement form is to be completed to acknowledge receipt of an Offer of Placement.

Enrolment decisions are led by the Head of School and are made in collaboration with the parents or guardians of the student.

If the decision is made to offer a child a place and there is a place available for the nominated commencement date, an Offer of Placement will be sent to the applicant.

### **4. Continued Enrolment**

Continued enrolment at the school is dependent upon the student making satisfactory academic progress, attending consistently and the student and the parents or guardians observing all aspects of the student code of conduct and other requirements of the school which are applicable from time to time.

## **Policy Development**

The development and refinement of school policies, procedures and guidelines is an ongoing task at Port Macquarie Steiner School.

We ensure that policies are readily available, either through the school's website for families or in the school management system for staff. Policy sessions are held throughout the year to ensure staff are aware of and are part of the updating of policies that are relevant to their work.

## **Policy Changes Throughout 2022**

Policies that were included in the 2022 review are listed below:

- Fee Assistance policy
- Child Protection policy
- Fire Evacuation policy

## **Financial Report**

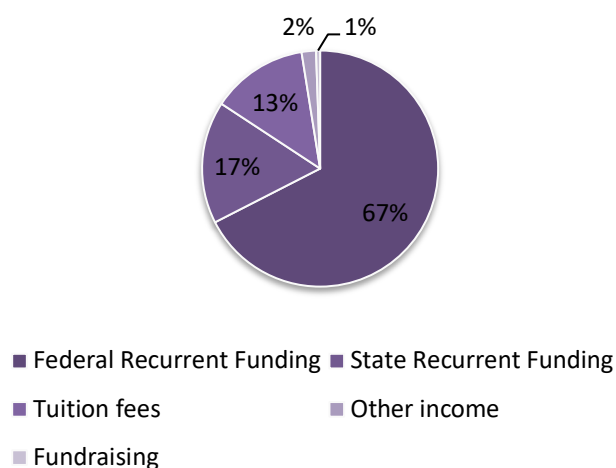
The school had a strong cash position at the end of the 2022 year. There was a 20% growth in revenue in 2022.

The main expense was salaries and wages including teaching, assistance, administration, relief, and maintenance staff. The school finances were well managed throughout the year resulting in an end of year profit of around 12% of total income.

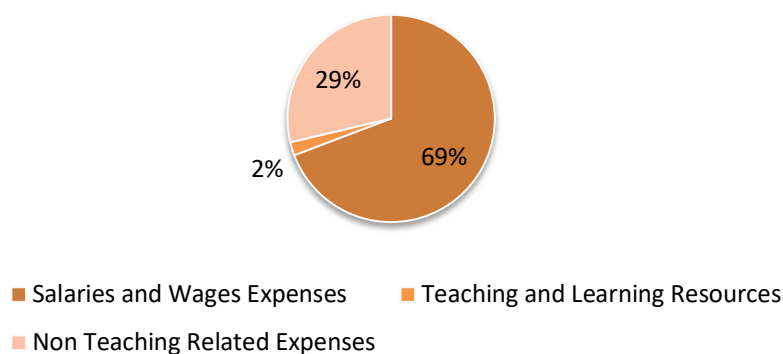
A major strategic goal for the school is the commissioning of the stage 1 project. Throughout the 2022 year the school committed some private funds towards capital consulting costs for the DA on the new property and to progress the school's 5 year strategic plan.

In 2022 the Building Fund grew by 500% as a result of some major and very welcome tax-deductible donations and interest earned. This is a wonderful result for the school as preparations are underway for the Stage 1 project.

### Analysis of Recurrent Income in 2022



### Analysis of Recurrent Expenses 2022



Mel Ayriss – Business Manager

### Looking Back on the Previous Year

The unfolding of the Covid-19 situation and the school's establishment of learning from home routines in 2020 allowed for a preparedness to re-enter periods of learning from home in 2022 as needed.

The work of the Future Site Committee in 2020 put the school in very good stead for the establishment of the School Building Committee and the continuing work on the future school development.



## Looking Forward to Priority Areas for Improvement and Development

Priorities for 2023:

- strengthen the Steiner Education pedagogy throughout the school through the work of the Education Director and the teaching faculty
- further embed appraisal and professional development
- create a unified approach to assessment and reporting using the Steiner National Curriculum within the NESA framework
- to continue towards the goal of developing the school on the new site through the Stage 1 development





**PORT MACQUARIE**  
**Steiner School**

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