



**The Armidale Waldorf School**  
and Boongaiai Preschool  
FOR RUDOLF STEINER EDUCATION

*More than an education: a foundation for life*



## **2019 Annual Report Education and Financial Reporting**

278 Rockvale Road Armidale NSW 2350

[www.waldorf.nsw.edu.au](http://www.waldorf.nsw.edu.au)

[office@waldorf.nsw.edu.au](mailto:office@waldorf.nsw.edu.au)

We acknowledge that our School stands in the Country of the Anaiwan people. We respect and acknowledge that, here, people are surrounded by a sense of belonging, both ancient and contemporary, bestowed on us by one of the world's oldest living continuing cultures. We will share in caring for this Country together with the Anaiwan, Gumbaynggirr, Kamilaroi, and Dhunghutti Nations. We would like to pay respect to the Elders, past and present, of these Nations, and to those who are yet to come.

Children's Acknowledgement of Country:

*Ilaan nyaka raakya-ti-na kyunta Anaiwan*

Today we stand on Anaiwan ground

*Niitika ayitika nakutika ruunpa ilaan*

Let's sit, look and listen well today

(Developed in collaboration with members of the Anaiwan language revival group)

## **THEME 1 - MESSAGES FROM THE KEY BODIES OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Chair of Board Report**

#### **2019 in review**

Here we are again, with another year behind us – and what a year it has been. I will never tire of thanking all of you - this wonderful team of teachers, administrators, facilities staff and managers who continue to excel in delivering such high quality education for our students. Once again, we have maintained a stable and solid team of Educators, Administrators, Managers and Directors, the benefit of which, again, is evident in the growing enrolments and increased participation of our School Community as we move forward. Zana, I thank you for continuing to lead us through the myriad of regulations and requirements that ensure our ongoing viability and our ability to provide the best possible experience for our students.

Our Community Conversations, the third of which was held in September, continue to grow and I'm very pleased to now be able to report back to community on the progress we are making against the Business and Strategic Plans they have contributed to over the past three years. That we are able to demonstrate back to our School Community the actions we are taking to achieve the priorities set by them is a remarkable achievement – one that would not be possible without you, Steven, as you consistently go above and beyond to ensure our business needs are addressed and that we are always prepared for whatever comes next.

This time last year I talked about the importance of harnessing and building on the energy created through these Community Conversations, at that time referring to the success of our 2<sup>nd</sup> Community Conversation. Now, with three of these events under our belt, I am confident that our School Community now see this as an ongoing commitment to ensuring a participative approach to planning, and value their role in it. The commitment, energy and expertise brought to these Conversations by our broader school community is nothing short of extraordinary.

During 2020 The Board continues to move ahead with planning for expanding our School to offer classes for Years 9 and 10. We continue to monitor both the commitment of parents, the interest of the broader community, and of course the associated potential risks. As we do, we will continue to keep the entire

School Community well informed of progress and are always happy to answer an queries people may have.

Once again, we watched our student numbers steadily climb during 2018, and once again we start the 2020 School Year on increasingly solid ground. The continued strength of enrolments in the early years again demonstrate the growing appreciation among the Armidale community in general for the particular style and character of the education we offer. This is testament to the care and dedication of our teachers. The work of the College of Teachers is vital in this respect and I warmly thank Karen Jenkins as the College Chair for ensuring the values of Steiner Education are firmly embedded in our teaching practices.

At a time when so many conversations about leadership globally are sadly tinged with cynicism and distrust, providing our young people with an education that has its roots soundly in creativity, capability and resilience has never been more important.

## **Board changes**

For the entire 2019 year The Board has remained stable. We will continue to seek new Board Members who can bring the necessary skills and experience to The School.

## **Governance and professional development**

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.

Participation in these events and training opportunities is important if we are to continue to deliver quality Steiner education in challenging times.

## **Volunteers and community**

As always, the Friends of Waldorf continue to contribute greatly to maintaining the School's energy and vitality. During 2019 Lisa Nolan, as the Board representative on The Friends of Waldorf, has provided the group with sound support and a transparent relationship with The Board. I thank you, Lisa, for your continued commitment.

This School succeeds because of the community that surrounds and nurtures it. 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 story-telling, with tuck-shop 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 the world.

You are all so greatly appreciated.

*Maureen Chapman*

*Director and Board Chair*

## **Education Director Report**

### **The focus for 2019 was in the following key areas:**

- Increasing enrolments across the school especially in the high school.
- Continuing our work of investigating the potential of extending to class 9/10
- Strengthening processes around safety on school camps
- Completing our submission of our Reconciliation action plan to Narragunnawali Australia and to build and strengthen understanding and inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures at the Armidale Waldorf School in order to create powerful, positive and harmonious relationships within the school and in the wider community

### **Overview**

The theme for 2019 was looking ahead - where can we go; how can we continue to provide a rich Steiner education for our students beyond class 8 whilst maintaining the strength and stability that we have built on over the past 4 years.

In February, we started the year with 122 students from Kindergarten to Class 8 and had 118 by the August census. Our classes were Kindergarten, Class 1/2, Class 3/4, Class 5/6, and Class 7/8. During the year, primary class sizes ranged from 15-34. The early childhood area reached 88% capacity in Term 4 (providing for 24 families), along with PlayTime running for two mornings and 1 afternoon per week (servicing 26 families).

### **Feasibility for Class 9/10**

The School worked to create a timeline to identify critical tasks and deadlines to determine if the School would progress to Class 9/10 in 2022. As part of this, the Board undertook a detailed risk assessment around the proposed expansion and approved timeline and by the end of 2019 the school commenced planning and marketing for Class 9 to begin in 2022 and combined 9/10 in 2023. The timeline included exit points if for any reason it was not in the best interest of the school to continue with the plan to expand.

### **Community Conversation**

We held our third Community Conversation in September, providing an overview of how the School was going and inviting feedback on what we areas we were doing well in and the areas we could improve. We were also able to briefly outline the proposed next steps for the introduction of Class 9/10.

### **Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP):**

This was an important year for our school around our RAP. After being successful with a grant from Steiner Education Australia (SEA) we had the opportunity to work with Steve Evans (one of SEA's RAP members) to help get our RAP plan submitted and accepted by Narragunnawali Australia. We were delighted to have our RAP endorsed and published on the Narragunnawali website in November.

This process involved meeting with the wider community, students and families over a shared lunch and talking circle. There were sessions talking with students about how they felt about being an aboriginal student in our school and what they wanted to see develop in the future. This was a powerful time of acknowledgement for us all.

We are the second Steiner school in Australia to have a RAP programme up and running alongside Linuwel Steiner School in Maitland who provided the initial inspiration for us to begin one here after attending the SEA Delegate meeting at their school.

We celebrated Naidoc Day with a whole school day of activities including language classes, Aboriginal games, we painted the flag and talked about the significance of the flag, we participated in a Digeridoo performance and listened to stories about totems. Community members were invited and took part in the celebrations and a shared lunch.

The Bush Food book that the school had been working on for several years was published as an ongoing resource for the school that was integrated into our garden programme.

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD (Playtime and Preschool)**

### **PlayTime**

PlayTime, coordinated by Rosy McGrath, had a very successful year with great numbers in all sessions and a very committed group of families eager to engage with the wider school community through the school festivals and other events. Some of the children have started in our Preschool throughout the year and others have enrolled for 2020. We were fortunate to have Nadia Waters take the sessions during Rosy's professional placements and other periods which was wonderful for the continuity of our groups.

This year we began a trial of the 3-5 year old group, which was aimed at families who could not enrol in Preschool or were not quite ready, to continue a connection with the school and give them an afternoon close to what would be experienced within the Preschool. This built on the program for the younger group with more teacher-led activities and an increased focus on independence and social development. The afternoon has been very successful, with five of the children enrolled in our kindergarten for 2020. We will be continuing this program into 2020.

### **Boongaiai Preschool**



#### Enrolments 2019

Term 1 – 72%

Term 2 – 90%

Term 3 – 89%

Term 4 – 88%

At the end of 2019, 11 out of 14 kindergarten-aged children from the Preschool enrolled in The Armidale Waldorf School's Kindergarten class for 2020, with 9 other children enrolling from the broader community

Donna Grey was appointed to the Preschool Director role at the start of the

year and successfully managed the Early Childhood Education Directorates Assessment & Rating in April, which showed that Boongaiai Preschool was meeting all the National Quality Standards. Well done to everyone involved.

Over the course of the year Playtime, Preschool and Kindergarten shared with enthusiasm in promoting Early Childhood within the school and the broader community.



## PRIMARY and HIGH SCHOOL (Class K-8)

### Programs and Activities for 2019



**The High School.** Class 7/8 combined to make a class of 19, immersed in the rich Steiner curriculum which included King Arthur, Nature and Geometry, Mechanics, The Middle Ages, Tribal Societies, Combustion, Age of Discovery, Ratio and Surveying, Physics of Air and Water and Wish, Wonder and Surprise. The class also enjoyed many curriculum-enrichment programmes, including woodwork classes at TAFE, Art with Belinda, Maths with Chris, and sessions on Wellbeing with Melanie Deefholts.

**Learning Support:** The Learning support staff increased this year to include additional Student Learning Assistants working from Kindergarten to Class 7/8. The Learning Support team (with 9 staff which include Student Learning Assistants) strengthened and expanded the capacity of Learning Support in the school both in and outside the classroom. We have continued whole-school screening for all students at the beginning of each year and again at the year's mid-point. 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 1/2 with other teachers taking part in the professional development on explicit teaching. Learning Support also received many additional resources to meet the needs of the students.

**Student Learning Assistants:** We expanded our use of student learning assistants from Kindergarten to Class 5/6 to support the student learning in and outside the classroom. The student learning assistants worked together as part of the Learning support team to support access to the curriculum for all students.

**Music:** Every class has a music lesson each week, as well as a class 3-6 Choir and a class 6-8 Choir accompanied by a pianist. Our 3/5 Choir performed in the Armidale Eisteddfod and Autumn Lodge.



**String Programme:** As part of our curriculum, Class 3 began the violin or cello and Class 4 continued developing their skills. The class 4 string ensemble; the 'Viking Ensemble' was not able to perform at the Spring Festival as it was cancelled due to bad weather. The class performed for their families as and the combined class went to Thalgarrah Environmental centre for their music camp in Term 2.

**Fiddlers Club:** 'Fiddlers Club' is made up of musicians from Class 4-8. They often play at

our festivals and assemblies. Joanna lead the group this year, with the group playing a variety of repertoire. They also performed at the Spring Fair in Term 4.

**Woodwind and Brass Programme.** This year we fundraised for instruments (flute, clarinet, trumpet, trombone) so that classes could begin in 2020.

**French:** Classes from K-8 enjoyed weekly French lessons under the guidance of Michelle Le Gal, where the younger students learnt basic French through song and games. Class 1/2 learn a variety of fairy tales and performed a play for other classes. Class 3-6 covered a number of topics including clothing, food, weather and time. Class 7/8 as well as French grammar spent time in the kitchen for cooking classes and learn about many of the cultural experiences such as Bastille day.



**Gardening:** Our large vegetable garden is tended by the classes under Woody's (Belinda Nano) guidance, each student spending regular time weeding, making compost, planting and harvesting. The produce is then used in our Friday Tuckshop, or Class cooking. Due to the drought in Term 4 the gardening classes often ended up in the kitchen bottling fruit, making chutneys and jam.

**Sport Programs/Activities:** As a school we offer a holistic approach to education based on what is developmentally appropriate for each child. In the same way that we do not have standardised testing and competition in the classroom, our games and sporting events are based on cooperation and participation, rather than winning:

- **Bush Walks** – Primary students participate in bush walks; usually to the pine forest. This builds 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 come together to play physical games, which incorporate 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 Carnival** – During Term 1, Classes 1 to 8 participate in a swimming carnival. Only Class 3 and upward join the swimming 'races', while Class 1/2 play organised games and swim with their teacher and helpers. They also watch 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** – Our Cross Country is held at the end of Term 2 in the Pine Forest. Courses vary in length and difficulty and are set and marked out by the Class 7/8 students the day before. Students from Classes 1 to 8 are free to choose the course or courses they wish. Some students like to challenge themselves and/or each other by running as many courses as possible, while others simply meander around only one course.
- **Athletic Carnival** – We held our athletics carnival at Charleston Willows on the last day of Term 3. Classes 1 to 6 come together to participate in both traditional athletic events, such as high jump and discus, as well as fun events like the sack race and wheelbarrow race.
- **School Fair:** The School Fair was again a successful showcase of our school to the community, and also a day out for all involved in the school to come together and share in the many traditions and activities. The open classroom was well attended with many new visitors to the school. A special thanks to Woody and Terry for volunteering as the coordinators and bringing everyone together to enjoy a day of music, crafts, food and fun for the whole community.





**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 allow students to 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.



**Camps** - In 2019, The school underwent a substantial reworking of the processes and systems around school camps with a focus on sun safety, water safety, volunteer induction and selection processes, educational outcomes and a more streamlined communication between the school and parents.

Class 1/2 spent two nights at Thalgarrah Environmental centre where they experienced bushwalks, yabby fishing and helping prepare meals. Class 3/4 participated in a 2-night music camp at Thalgarrah and were very lucky to visit

Marnook, a biodynamic dairy farm where they experienced milking cows, cleaning the stalls and bush walks. Class 5/6 went to Gibraltar range and Yuraygir National Parks early in the year where they enjoyed many coastal treats and spent 4 nights at Lake Ainsworth in term 4, learning to sail, canoe and practice archery. Class 7/8 undertook a challenging 13-day coastal walk in Term 2 and mapping and surveying camp closer to home in the Styx River area during Term 4.



**Class Plays** - Our class plays give teachers many chances to build the social strength of their class; it often also reinforces 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 1/2 performed *The King of Islands Son*, Class 3/4 performed *The Fate of Baldur*, Class 5/6 entertained the community with an Egyptian Play titled *The Light of Isis and Osiris* and Class 7/8 performed a stunning rendition of *The Canterbury Tales*.

**Student Wellbeing Programme:** The school’s Wellbeing co-ordinator works with students across the school in conjunction with class teachers and the ED. In addition, Class 5-8 continued to have sessions with Melanie Deefolts, around Wellbeing and puberty. This was supported by a talk for parents about the developmental milestones for upper classes.

**Support for students and teachers.** The emphasis for the first part of 2019 was on preparing for the NESA monitoring visit in March. The Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan provided many opportunities for staff to learn about current research in this area, allowing much discussion and reflection in College. As a whole staff, we worked with Steve Streeton on *Differentiation: growing every student*; *Approaching Literacy through Creative Writing years 1-6* with Shelley Davidow; *Healthy Communication: Teacher’s Voice* with Nicole Ostini and *The Neuroscience of Communications and Being Your Best Self-Resilience* with Silvia de Ridder. There were opportunities to strengthen the inner world of staff members with sessions in Eurythmy, Art and Speech and Drama from “Developing the Self” as well as support around working with the children in the classroom from Melanie Deefolts and Libby Maher. Other teachers undertook observations and conferences in other Steiner schools. Some of our teachers attended the workshops on sustainability, wellbeing, digital technology, NCCD and child protection.

**Library:** Our library collection of books and resources continued to blossom and grow under the guidance of our library coordinator, Adriana. The library underwent a makeover with many new shelves built that allows for more flexible arrangement to provide a flexible space for class plays, meetings, workshops and talks.



**Tuck Shop:** This activity continued to provide wholesome food on Fridays with the help of parents and classes. This year the school in partnership with Friends of Waldorf who employed a Tuckshop co-ordinator. We continued the much-loved tradition of Dads’ barbeque, followed by ice-cream in a cone for the last Friday of each term. Often the Tuckshop menu is created from produce grown in our own vegetable garden.

**Festivals...times for the whole community:** Festivals are integral to the rhythm of life within our school; the goal is to develop in the child a sense of the rhythm of the seasons and the passage of time, and a sense that there is something bigger than oneself.

In 2019, our first festival was the TAWS Autumn and Kite Festival celebrating 100 year of Waldorf Education. This was overseen by Class 1/2, with many activities and races enjoyed by the children and families.

Class 6/7/8 led the Winter Festival with a complex rhythmical fire display set to music. This is a spectacular festival beginning with a whole-school singing performance followed by a silent spiral walk. The highlight is the lighting of the bonfire, which is done using the fire sticks from the Class 6/7/8 performance.

Class 3/4 would usually lead the Spring Festival, but unfortunately the event was cancelled due to heavy smoke from bushfires in the region.

Our last Festival for 2019 was the Advent Festival coordinated by Class 5/6. This is a nice relaxed festival with a small craft followed by carol singing.



**Freunde:** The Freunde program allows the school to host young visitors from Germany who chose to spend a gap-year doing volunteer-work abroad. The Freunde are hosted by families from within the school community, and they spend the weekdays performing various duties around the school – they may be assisting in a classroom, working in the garden, repairing desks and chairs, or helping on a class camp.

This program is an invaluable part of the school's life, and we are very grateful to be a part of it. Unfortunately, we were forced to suspend this program for 2019/20 due to a lack of host families, however it is planned to proceed again in 2020/21.

**Community Engagement and Education.** There was a great programme of talks and workshops throughout the year, including: educational talks for parents, classes and one-to-one consultation with Melanie Deefholts ; sharing her knowledge on child development for different ages with an array of practical advice to help parents and students cope with the ups and downs of raising healthy, confident children. The school also partnered with UNE and provided Japanese students with a tour of our school and short talk from the Educational Director on Steiner Education.

**Friends of Waldorf:** The focus of the group is on promoting the school by fostering and supporting a vibrant and happy school community. FoW also supports the school by providing funding for special projects made possible by the money raised at the Spring Fair and other fundraisers.





**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.

### External Compliance

**First Aid:** All staff had the opportunity to complete their full First Aid training (required every 3 years) or completed their yearly Anaphylaxis and Asthma training.

**Fire Training:** All staff completed Fire Training.

**NAPLAN** This year we had 2 students in Class 3; 7 students in Class 5 and no students in Class 7 sit NAPLAN.

**NCCD.** (National Consistent Collection of Data) One staff member attended professional development in recent updates for NCCD with the AIS, which supported the school in the process of collecting and entering data on disabilities and its yearly submission.

### Child Protection

All staff undertook child protection training at the end of the year as part of our staff day.

### Policy refreshers

All staff undertook policy refreshers in the following school policies.

- Child Protection Policy
- Whistle-blower Policy
- Family Guide for School and their Staff
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Duty of Care for Staff
- Unlawful Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Statement
- Communication Protocol
- Staff Grievance Procedures

**Report Writing.** The Armidale Waldorf School sends out 2 formal reports to parents, during mid-year and again at the end of the year. This is supplemented by parent-teacher meetings following these reports.

**NESA.** The School underwent a monitoring visit for the primary School.

**Governance Training:** Management and some directors completed AIS Independent Schools Governance online modules as well as a workshop with Chris Duncan.

## **Conclusion**

I have been in this role for 4 years now, with each year bringing new opportunities to learn and grow. It is such a privilege and honour to work within this wonderfully supportive school community.

This year The Armidale Waldorf School has grown in its capacity to provide a unique education and to support our expanding school community. For a small regional school, The Armidale Waldorf School has a wealth of expertise in its teaching and support staff, a wonderful admin team, and an amazing community of parents and children! I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board Chair and the Board for their guidance and support this year; Steven Breese for his dedication and commitment to streamlining our systems and processes for the smooth running of the school; the College of Teachers for their commitment to inner work and reflections on Steiner education in the world today, and the impulse and courage that comes from this; all teaching staff for their dedication to teaching and the love of children; the admin staff for their behind-the-scenes support of the children, parents, teachers and Management team. I have worked in this school over many years now, in several different roles. I have really valued the insights and perspectives I have gained from each one of these points of view. When I reflect on the school now, I appreciate more than ever how important it is for it to function as a team right across the board, with respect for the strengths and gifts each one brings to the whole. It is the children, the parents, the teachers, the support staff and the Board all working together that allows the school to continue to grow and provide the richness of a Steiner education for all the children in our care both now and in the future.

*Zana Clarke,*

*Education Director*



## THEME 2 - CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL



The New England region's only Steiner (or Waldorf) school opened in February 1985 as Boongaiai School (meaning shaded place). Beginning as a Preschool only, the Kindergarten started two years later followed by the classes of the primary school in subsequent years. After the land was acquired with the help of the school's benefactor, Kit Wyndham, existing buildings were renovated and the property further enhanced by unique architecturally designed classrooms. Lovingly-donated labour over the years has also helped develop and maintain a picturesque bush block as an aesthetic and natural learning environment. In 1993 the School changed its name to The Armidale Waldorf School and currently includes Preschool and Kindergarten through to Year 8.

### **Characteristics of the Student Body**

The Armidale Waldorf School is a Kindergarten to Year 8 Co-educational Non-Denominational School and the only Steiner School situated in the New England Area. Armidale is a regional city with a University and surrounded by rural communities. Students come from Armidale city and also the broader New England Region. The student body includes 15% students of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.

### **Steiner or Waldorf Education**

Steiner Education is a holistic education, nurturing childhood - encouraging and allowing children to be children. Awakening and educating a child's capacity for clear thinking, responsive feeling and capable action in the world around them lies at the heart of the education. The curriculum and methodology are based on a deep understanding of how children learn, develop and flourish, and teachers are involved in ongoing learning of this study. The learning through imitation in the early years, imagination in the primary school years and inspiration in the teens are fundamental principles in Steiner education and the teaching methodology is built upon this. Learning for head, heart and hands is how it was initially expressed. Recognisable characteristics of Steiner education include the balance of the academic, the arts and the practical, an emphasis on the process of learning as opposed to outcome based assessment, minimal competition, fostering human relationships and an interest and respect for the natural world.

## The Waldorf Approach to Teaching and the Curriculum



Our school curriculum is designed to meet the needs of the students as they grow developmentally. It is approved by ACARA (the national curriculum body) and by NESA (NSW Education Standards Authority). It is delivered in such a way to capture the imagination, and for the children to learn what is age-appropriate. The social tone of the school, the designed buildings and the nature of the environment combine to provide an extra-ordinary place for children to thrive. One important part of how the curriculum is delivered is the 'Main Lesson'. For the first two hours of every day one subject is presented as a block. This in depth study continues for three to four weeks. Then the subject changes: the rest of the morning is used for revision and expansion on these themes and academic skills; the afternoons for physical education and art and handcrafts.

**There is a highly valued outdoor education and camps program**, which relates to the curriculum areas of Science or Society and Environment - farming, botany, zoology or geology.

### A Typical Week in Our School

Over a typical week, above and beyond the timetable, there are instrumental music lessons, the playing of recorder, strings ensemble and /or drama rehearsals and learning support. A class could also be away on a camp to various near and far locations in NSW. A culinary highlight of the week is 'Friday Tuckshop'. Parents and or classes prepare a two course meal and the whole school gather together to enjoy these delicious and nutritious meals. Friday afternoon is usually games afternoon so classes share common games and physical activities. Over the course of the year, there is the Swimming and Athletics Carnival, Cross Country, Seasonal Festivals, assemblies, open mornings, music concerts and class plays, Class Parent /Teacher meetings, working bees, social events, the annual fundraising event, the School Fair and much more!

### THEME 3 – STUDENT OUTCOMES IN STANDARDISED NATIONAL LITERACY AND NUMERACY TESTING

This year we had 2 students in Class 3; 7 students in Class 5 and no students in Class 7 sit NAPLAN 2019 and these results can be viewed at <http://www.myschool.edu.au>

### THEME 4 - SENIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS

Not applicable



## THEME 5 - TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING, ACCREDITATION and QUALIFICATIONS

### Professional Learning

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF STAFF PARTICIPATING
Teacher training – class teaching intensives Glenaeon	2
Child Protection Investigation Course AIS	2
Observing at Central Coast Steiner School	1
Observing at Central Coast Steiner School	1
Science and Technology training for stage 4	1
Steiner Education Australia Delegate meeting	2
Staff Professional Learning day. Eurythmy, Art and how to work with the Teachers Meditation	All Staff
Meaghan and Seamus Drama and Speech workshops for Staff and children	10
DIFFERENTIATION: GROWING EVERY STUDENT Steve Stretton	15
First Aid, CPR, Asthma & Anaphylaxis (HLTAID004; HLTAID001; 22282VIC & 22300VIC)	All Staff
Approaching Literacy through Creative Writing years 1-6 with Shelley Davidow	All Staff
Healthy Communication: Teacher's Voice with Nicole Ostini	All Staff
Evidence-based Classroom management - AIS	3
Fire Drill/ Fire Safety	All staff completed Fire Training with some staff members also completing the Fire Warden training.
AIS Child Protection investigation course	4 staff
NCCD (National Consistent Collection of Data) AIS Briefing	2
The Neuroscience of Communications Being Your Best Self - Resilience	All Staff
AIS School Improvement Workshop	10
AIS Annual Briefing	2
AIS Managing School Construction Projects	1

Royal Far West 4 Capacity Building Webinar and modules	7
Governance and Leadership Conference/and Workshop Management travelled to Lorient Novalis Steiner School in Dural to attend the SEA Governance, Leadership and Management Conference	2
Literacy and Numeracy: Participation in Phase 2 NSW Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Master Classes x 4</li> <li>- Literacy &amp; Numeracy Workshops x 3</li> <li>- Numeracy in school PD and class observations</li> <li>- Literacy in school PD and class observations</li> </ul>	3 7 8 8
Weekly attendance at College and Faculty meetings, including Study of Steiner Education	All teachers 1 hours per week.  7 teachers and Education Director an additional 2 hours per week.

#### Details of the teachers' accreditation status of all teaching staff

Accreditation Status	Number of Teachers
Proficient Teacher	11
Provisional Teacher	1

#### Teaching standards/qualifications

Category	Number of Teachers
i. Teachers having teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines, or	12
ii. Teachers having a bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications.	-

#### THEME 6 - WORKFORCE COMPOSITION

	Head Count	FTE
Teacher	10	7.35
Non-teacher	14	8.10
Preschool	4	2.74
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	1	0.4

## THEME 7 - ATTENDANCE AND RETENTION RATE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Year	Attendance Rate %
K	87%
Year 1	86%
Year 2	87%
Year 3	90%
Year 4	91%
Year 5	91%
Year 6	90%
Year 7	95%
Year 8	91%
Whole School	90%

### Management of non-attendance

The school implements procedures for the management of student non-attendance in accordance with the Attendance Policy. A phone call or email is sent to parents of students who are absent. The school follows up where explanation of absence is not received.

Absences are monitored and interviews are held to find means of support with parents where there is cause for concern. Mandatory reporting procedures apply where absences are extended, or the student may be at risk.

### WHERE DO OUR GRADUATES CONTINUE ON TO?

Students leave at the end of Year 8 and enrol in other high schools in the community.

## THEME 8 - ENROLMENT POLICY

The Armidale Waldorf School is a comprehensive, co-educational, non-denominational Kindergarten to Year 8 School operating in accordance with the NSW Educational Standards Authority requirements providing an education according to the indications of Rudolf Steiner.

Continuing enrolment is subject to the student's adherence to school rules and school ethos and regular attendance. Parental support for the school's philosophy and ethos and payment of all school fees are part of the enrolment contract.

## THEME 9 - OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES\*

### A. Policies for Student Welfare

The Armidale Waldorf School seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment that minimizes risk of harm and ensures that students feel secure, supports the physical, social, academic, spiritual and emotional development of students, and provides student welfare policies and programs that develop a sense of self-worth and foster personal development. To ensure that all aspects of the school's mission for providing for a student's welfare are implemented, the following policies and procedures are in place:

Behaviour Management Policy

Attendance Policy



Student Welfare Policy

Child Protection Policy

Serious Incident and Emergency Policy

#### **B. Anti-bullying Policy**

The school's Anti Bullying Policy outlines that any behaviour such as bullying, harassing, cyber bullying or violent behaviour is not tolerated at the school. The policy provides processes for responding and managing allegations of bullying including the contact information for the local police School Liaison and Youth Liaison Officers.

#### **C. Policies for Student Discipline**

Students are required to abide by the school's rules and to follow the directions of teachers and other people with authority delegated by the school. Where unruly behaviour occurs, the principles of restorative justice are applied.

If disciplinary action is required, penalties imposed vary according to the nature of the breach of discipline and a student's prior behaviour.

All disciplinary action that may result in any sanction against the student including suspension, expulsion follows processes based on procedural fairness.

The school expressly prohibits corporal punishment and does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school.

#### **D. Policies for Complaints or Grievances**

The school acknowledges that those receiving services from the school may sometimes have a complaint or concern about a decision, behaviour, act or omission that they feel is unacceptable. The Complaints and Grievance Policy outlines the processes by which parents, students and the wider school community raise a complaint and how the alleged complaint is responded to using the principles of procedural fairness.

	<b>Changes in 2019</b>	<b>Access to Full Text</b>
Student Welfare The school provides a safe, secure and supportive environment through the implementation of its policies and procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Procedures for First Aid and Administration of Medication were updated to include a new medications register</li><li>• Procedures around the planning of camps and volunteers on camps were updated</li><li>• Procedures around Pastoral Care were updated to include the newly created Wellbeing Coordinator role at the school</li><li>• Emergency Procedures were updated to include new phone/alarm system</li><li>• Child Protection Policy now has a new Staff Acknowledgement Form</li></ul>	The full text of the policy and associated procedures is available to all members of the school community by request to the Education Director or School Manager. A summarised version is available through The Parent Handbook and on the school website.
Anti-Bullying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No changes were made</li></ul>	The full text of the policy and associated procedures is available to all members of the school community by request to the Education Director or School Manager. A summarised version is available through The Parent Handbook and on the school website.

Student Discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No changes were made</li> </ul>	The full text of the policy and associated procedures is available to all members of the school community by request to the Education Director or School Manager. A summarised version is available through The Parent Handbook and on the school website.
Complaints or Grievance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name change of Policy to Complaints or Grievance</li> <li>Reference to the Child Protection Policy and the process about raising an issue in relation to Child Protection were included</li> </ul>	The full text of the policy and associated procedures is available to all members of the school community by request to the Education Director or School Manager. A summarised version is available through The Parent Handbook and on the school website.

\* Parents may request a copy of any of these policies, some are on the website. The policies are issued to all staff and revised and updated. Workshops are held to ensure understanding of the responsibilities and policies. There is a regular timetable of review.

**THEME 10 - SCHOOL DETERMINED IMPROVEMENT TARGETS**  
**ACHIEVEMENT OF PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED IN THE 2019 REPORT**

Areas	Priority	Achievements
Facilities	Improve facilities as per the School Facility Master Plan	Upgrade of carpark and drainage; Enclose under library to provide additional meeting/general use space; Completion of disabled and boys toilets under Library; Completion of IT Lab.
Student Welfare	Continue to develop the student wellbeing program via external supports.	Two additional staff attended AIS Child Protection Investigation Course. Library open 3 lunch times per week
Teaching and Learning	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. Expand this to include all teachers throughout the School. Continuation of Student Learning Assistants across all classes to assist students to access the curriculum. Investigate participation in the AIS School Improvement Plan.	Continued whole school screening Continued participation and engagement with Phase 2 Numeracy and Literacy Action Plan, funded by AISNSW. Student Learning Assistants employed to meet student need in each class.
Staff Development	Pedagogy: Excellence in Teaching through increased resources in professional development.	The increased Professional Development budget was maintained to provided professional development for all staff on site and where needed off site to meet individual and school needs.

	Continue to increase Professional Development opportunities across the School to provide a skilled workforce	
Leadership and Governance	Maintain all Policies to be compliant with NESA requirements	Policies are reviewed and updated to meet NESA requirements.

## 2020 PRIORITY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Area	Priorities
Facilities	Improve facilities as per the School Facility Master Plan
Class 9/10	Work toward development of curriculum and facilities to cater for expansion to Class 9/10 in 2022 Increase enrolments in the high school to build numbers for introduction of 9/10 in 2022
Teaching and Learning	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. Expand this to include all teachers throughout the School. Continuation of Student Learning Assistants across all classes to assist students to access the curriculum.
Staff Development	Pedagogy: Excellence in Teaching through increased resources in professional development.  Continue to increase Professional Development opportunities across the School to provide a skilled workforce
Leadership and Governance	Maintain all Policies to be compliant with NESA requirements

## THEME 11 - INITIATIVES PROMOTING RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

The school intends that all students recognise that they are valued and integral members of the school community, with parents and staff providing the care and support that engender self-esteem, mutual respect and responsibility. We look for every opportunity to assist students to develop talents and to learn through practical experiences.

### Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

This was an important year for our school around our RAP. After being successful with a grant from Steiner Education Australia (SEA) we had the opportunity to work with Steve Evans (one of SEA's RAP members) to help get our RAP plan submitted and accepted by Narragunnawali Australia. We were delighted to have our RAP endorsed and published on the Narragunnawali website in November. Please refer to the Education Director's report for a fuller report.

## Challenging Craft Projects



The children were happily busy all year with numerous craft items including wooden cradles and swords; wool work with knitted beanies, jumpers and small animals including pom-pom Easter bunnies, woven recorder cases and geometry stars, crocheted seat cushion covers, ponchos and shoulder bags, cotton-thread work in cross-stitch, embroidery, long-stitch houses and sewing reader bags; papier-mâché shields, leather key-rings, coil baskets, mosaic tiles, soapstone carving, carved wooden spoons, felt dolls, wax modelling, class cooking and gardening, and a

variety of materials in the making of winter lanterns, including pottery, wood and paper. This programme goes across all areas of the school with projects developmentally chosen for the children at all levels.

## Participation

**Freunde:** Again this year the school hosted 3 young visitors from Germany who are spending a gap-year doing volunteer-work abroad. The Freunde are hosted by families from within the school community and they spend the weekdays performing various duties around the school – they may be assisting in a classroom, working in the garden, repairing desks and chairs or helping on a class camp. This program is an invaluable part of the school's life and we are very grateful to be a part of it.

**Tuck Shop:** This activity continued to provide wholesome food on Fridays with the help of parents and classes and this year with the addition of a Tuckshop Coordinator partly funded by the Friends of Waldorf. The funded position gave much assistance to parents and was a great achievement of the Friends of Waldorf in providing this assistance. We continued the much-loved tradition of Dads barbeque followed by ice-cream in a cone for the last Friday of each term. Often the Tuckshop menu is created from produce grown in our own vegetable garden.



**School Fair:** The School Fair was again a successful showcase of our school to the community and also a day out for our school community to come together and share in the many traditions and activities. Again there was an open classroom that means we were able to gauge the amount of outside interest in the school and provide extra information to those parents. A special thanks to all of the staff and parents for bringing everyone together to enjoy a day of music, crafts, food

and fun for the whole community.

**Festivals...times for the whole community:** Festivals are integral to the rhythm of life within our school; the goal is to develop in the child a sense of the rhythm of the seasons and the passage of time, and a sense that there is something bigger than oneself.

In 2019, our first festival was the TAWS Autumn and Kite Festival celebrating 100 year of Waldorf Education. This was overseen by Class 1/2, with many activities and races enjoyed by the children and families.

Class 6/7/8 led the Winter Festival with a complex rhythmical fire display set to music. This is a spectacular festival beginning with a whole-school singing performance followed by a silent spiral walk. The highlight is the lighting of the bonfire, which is done using the fire sticks from the Class 6/7/8 performance.

Class 3/4 would usually lead the Spring Festival, but unfortunately the event was cancelled due to heavy smoke from bushfires in the region.

**Community Engagement and Education.** There was a great programme of talks and workshops throughout the year, including: educational talks for parents, classes and one-to-one consultation with Melanie Deefholts ; sharing her knowledge on child development for different ages with an array of practical advice to help parents and students cope with the ups and downs of raising healthy, confident children. The school also partnered with UNE and provided Japanese students with a tour of our school and short talk from the Educational Director on Steiner Education.



### Performances

Students performed two violin concerts. We performed to the school, parents and community at various assemblies and festivals.

**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 each other and their responsibility to each other; they improve social skills, build self-confidence and resilience, and allow students to 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.

In 2019, The school underwent a substantial reworking of the processes and systems around school camps with a focus on sun safety, water safety, volunteer induction and selection processes, educational outcomes and a more streamlined communication between the school and parents.

Class 1/2 spent two nights at Thalgarrah Environmental centre where they experienced bushwalks, yabby fishing and helping prepare meals. Class 3/4 participated in a 2-night music camp at Thalgarrah and were



very lucky to visit Marnook, a biodynamic dairy farm where they experienced milking cows, cleaning the stalls and bush walks. Class 5/6 went to Gibraltar range and Yuraygir National Parks early in the year where they enjoyed many coastal treats and spent 4 nights at Lake Ainsworth in term 4, learning to sail, canoe and practice archery. Class 7/8 undertook a challenging 13-day coastal walk in Term 2 and mapping and surveying camp closer to home in the Styx River area during Term 4.

## **THEME 12 - PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION**

From the very beginnings of the school, the school has had a strong relationship with its parents. It was started as a parent initiative. The Friends of Waldorf meets regularly and can be a vehicle for expressing levels of parent satisfaction. This year the FoW organised the School Fair and also funded various other school enhancing projects throughout the year.

Teachers make themselves available to parents, and our 4 seasonal festivals are wonderful opportunities for parents, teachers and students to relax and celebrate together. There are also termly class meetings held for each class. All of these events are very well attended by parents.

There are many areas in which students have the opportunity to develop skills for life, and a particular aspect is the school camps in which students develop many skills in self-reliance and group concern. We generally have good student retention, and students always have the opportunity to discuss any concerns with their own class teacher, other teachers and the Education Director. As we are a small school, and many children have been here since babyhood in Playtime, Preschool, Kindergarten to graduation at the end of Year 8, every child is known to every member of staff, and all new children are warmly welcomed by all the teachers. We have a low turnover of students.

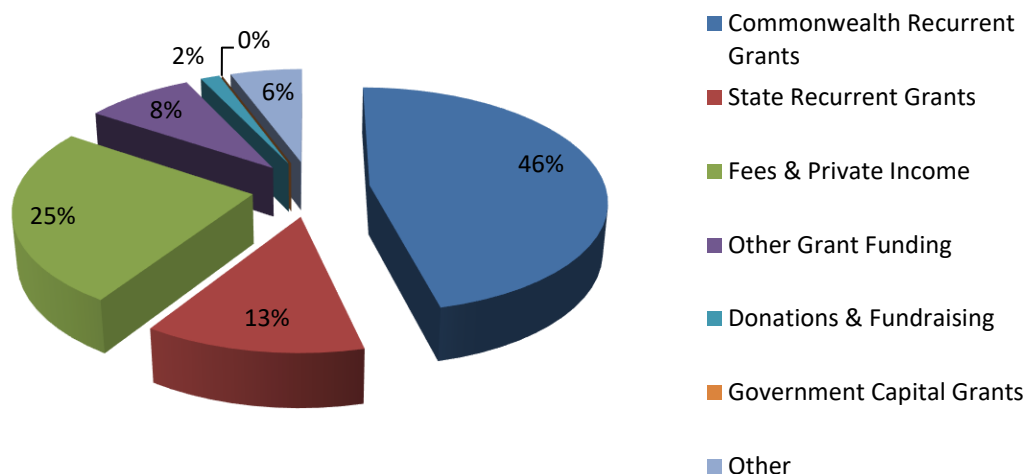
New teachers comment on the exceptionally warm and generous mentoring they receive from experienced teachers.

The Education Director has an open door policy to meet with parents and staff and students to hear any concerns and follow up and address them.

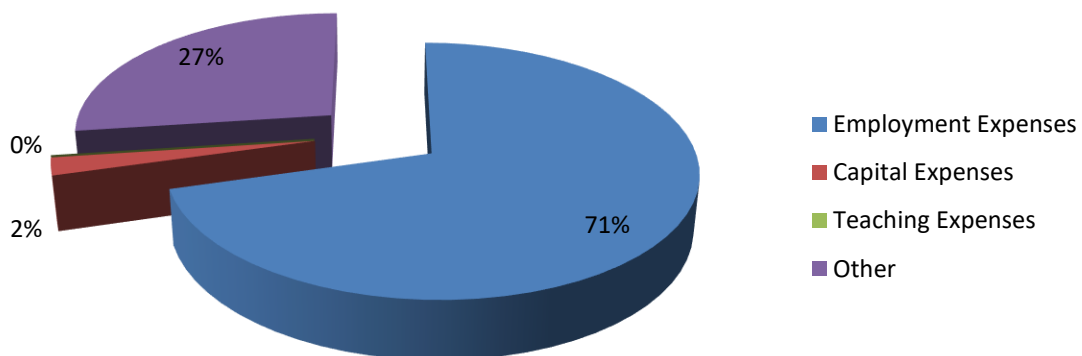
In addition, the school, has a Wellbeing co-ordinator to support students throughout the year and Melanie Deefolts continued to have sessions with Class 5-8 around Wellbeing and puberty. This was supported by a talk for parents about the developmental milestones for upper classes.

## THEME 13 - SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR 2019

**Sources of Income for The Armidale Waldorf School 2019**



**The Armidale Waldorf School Expenditure for 2019**



### School Manager Report

2019 continued to be very active with a number of capital projects taking place during the year. The main carpark area was upgraded early in the year in order to reduce the erosion and drainage issues as well as improve safety. Enclosing the Library sub-basement was also undertaken during Term 3, providing much needed additional space for class activities, meetings, and other activities. This project also saw the completion of the boys and disabled toilet which had not been completed in the original Library construction, almost 10 years ago. The IT Lab was completed during 2019, providing additional IT resources for both staff and students. The School self-funded all of these projects from surpluses generated over the past few years.

### School Finances:

The Armidale Waldorf School was able to achieve a surplus of \$184,653 for 2019 which is the fourth surplus in a row. The School has been keen to rebuild reserves after a number of prior year losses so that

it is more financially secure and can reinvest in some much-needed infrastructure. This result was achieved due to careful management of expenditure during the year and includes the non-cash costs of depreciation and the recognition of all staff entitlements. The School maintains provisions for staff annual leave and long service leave.

School income is essentially derived as a factor of enrolments. As enrolments increase so does the income and conversely, as enrolments decrease, so does the associated income. Much of the Schools costs are fixed (e.g. employment costs 71%), therefore there is often little capacity to reduce costs when enrolment numbers are low. The School is actively working toward maintaining and increasing enrolment numbers where possible so that it not only remains viable but will also prosper into the future.

The Armidale Waldorf School receives funding from both the State (13% of total revenue) and Federal (46%) governments based on the number of students enrolled as at census date. As an independent school, this funding does not cover all of our expenses, so to maintain our viability, it is important that the school charges fees. Fees are an important and integral part of the Schools revenues (25%), assisting the school to provide quality education. The Fee structure is designed to help everyone contribute fairly to meeting the costs incurred by the School and need to be collected in a sensible, transparent and thorough manner. Debt collection is now primarily carried out in-house, with a procedure designed to enhance the transparency and accountability of the process.

### **Staffing:**

Karen (Kindergarten), Tracey (Class 1/2), Angela (Class 3/4) and Tim (Class 5/6) and Joanne (Class 7/8) continued to provide quality education following the Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework, under the educational philosophy of Rudolf Steiner.

Boongaiai Preschool continued to provide quality early childhood education under the caring and professional direction from Donna, Khalida and Adrina. We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the Preschool team for successfully completing the Early Childhood Education Directorates Assessment & Rating in April, which showed that Boongaiai Preschool was meeting all the National Quality Standards. Well done to everyone involved.

Playtime continued to thrive under the guidance of Rosy McGrath, who has welcomed a number of new families to the School. The trial of an older Playtime group (3-5yo) went well, so will continue in 2020.

Our friendly and professional administration team is made up of Julie, Tanya, Kate and Tracy.

The School grounds and buildings are well cared for with the maintenance team of Ralph and Terry.

### **School Community:**

The School would not be the same without the community of parents, grandparents, friends, staff and of course the students. Steiner Education does not start and stop at the School boundary, but continues in every aspect of the children's lives, with all of us role models for the children.

Our Festivals and Fair are very much dependent on our volunteer community, who come together to make each one a success. Volunteers contribute enormously in many different ways, for which we are extremely grateful.

The school offers parents and carers the opportunity to reduce their fees by contributing to the daily upkeep of the school by cleaning classrooms and other buildings. This also has the added benefit of keeping the schools' costs (and therefore fees) down. These tasks are largely unseen by the wider school

community, however they keep our school beautiful and tidy. We would like to express our appreciation for all of our wonderful cleaners.

### **Looking Ahead:**

2020 will be an exciting year with capital works projects commencing in Term 1 including the upgrade and remediation of the drainage in the main playground. Other works will be scheduled throughout the year and include the upgrading of the Kindergarten Wet Area and the construction of a Maintenance compound. The School self-funded all of these projects from surpluses generated over the past few years. The School has received funding from the Local Schools Community Fund for an additional water tank. The School already has two 60,000 litre water tanks for drinking and washing purposes, so this tank will supplement these and also provide much needed water for irrigation purposes.

We are very happy to be able to maintain direct classroom supports in 2020 with the continuation of our Student Learning Assistant roles in our Kindergarten, 1/2, 3/4, 5/6 and 7/8 Classes. These roles provide support to the students with direction from the Learning Support Team and the teacher. Wellbeing is also continuing with a dedicated staff member as well as the addition of Extra Learning. This is a deliberate investment in the School and reflects the increasing needs of our students and the demands placed on teachers.

Preparations for the proposed Class 9/10 will take place during 2020 with a funding application to be submitted for a dedicated classroom. Work will also commence on the development of the Class 9/10 curriculum.

Steven Breese  
School Manager



### **THEME 14: PUBLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

The School produces an annual report in accordance with requirements of the NSW Education Standard Authority (NESA) and the Australian Government. This annual report is provided to NESA by the 30<sup>th</sup> June in the year after the reported school year. The annual report is also made available on the Schools website. A printed copy of the annual report will be provided on request.