

Education is not the filling of a
pail, but the lighting of a fire
WB Yeats



Annual Report 2013

Southern Highlands Rudolf Steiner School

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Our Beginnings

Our School is established for the object of operating a Rudolf Steiner co-educational primary school for children, irrespective of their social, religious or cultural background which:

provides a living, inspired learning environment, which strives to foster the qualities of goodness, beauty and truth through the research and implementation of the principles in the educational approach of Rudolf Steiner;

develops progressive social and cultural forms through nourishing the physical, soul and spiritual aspects of the community life of the school;

strives for a respectful, safe and loving environment between all who work and learn at the school.

In early 2012, the SHASE Board, with the immense contribution of playgroup families, began to apply for registration to run a Kindergarten in 2013.

The Board of Studies application was accepted by September 2012, and by December we had selected the interim name for our school as *Southern Highlands Rudolf Steiner School* and employed our wonderful teachers.

In January 2013, after countless preparation, anticipation, and jubilation, we opened our doors to eight wide-eyed and reverent children.





Our Education

At Southern Highlands Rudolf Steiner School, we strive to create a living and inspiring learning environment through our values based curriculum:

Main Lesson and storytelling is based upon a historical developmental perspective which gives a sense of timeless values- that we are all a part of humanity, each having qualities to value, share and contribute meaningfully. The archetypal richness speaks to the feeling experience and awakens feeling for beauty, truth and wisdom. This feeling engagement; engaging the life force through a deepening, balanced experience of the senses is always considered in the learning process and encouraged through physical experiential expression, advancing the use of imagination and initiative.

Creative arts and craft: Expressive movement and dramatic and poetic language, verse and song are integral to the daily rhythm of the school day. Deepening their experience through the living arts such as dramatic playmaking, creative movement and language and the exploration of colour creates dynamic nurturing experiences building on the life forces. Children learn about natural resources and how they become the material for making useful utensils containers props and aids in their developing lives. Practical application of a variety of crafting skills develops their confidence and abilities contributing to their sense of well being.

Caring for our environment: Outdoor class room, nature walks, the nature table, building the garden, reaping and preparing foods for community soup and bread, engaging with "green time not screen time"; all are activities which deepen our connection to the natural world and a sense of reverence for life. This in turn develops a sense of responsibility and care for the future and a feeling of empowerment to affect change.

Group and self directed play in particular engages the children in social and emotional education. The children negotiate many levels of relationships such as experiencing responsible leadership/ cooperation, consensual agreements, independence and self reliance.

Guidance and modelling by the teachers through their values including a restorative justice style practice, means that their interventions and modelling are always aimed towards respect, equality, health and wellbeing. A weekly focus for discussion at College meetings is based around aspiring values and student

social/emotional welfare. A three weekly in-depth Child Study also builds on nurturing and restorative processes.

Sharing circles with the whole class are founded on values of equality, community and an ability to negotiate and accept differences. Strengthening the sense of connection, daily circles including group meal time are a form of communication and engagement, deepening an attitude of care and respect for each other. This in turn encourages a safe and secure balance in personal relationship and group dynamics.

Caring for others and visitors to our school: Teachers promote caring from older to younger children at transition times in the day, they instil procedures such as greetings and acknowledgements and bring attention to inclusive behaviours and changes that assist conscious integration and a sense of rhythm. This in turn adds to a sense of security and self reliance-of self respect for the child.

Seasonal festivals and community events are community building with a global and historic perspective. They celebrate multicultural presence and contributions from within our community with aspirations for social renewal. Attending special indigenous nature days encourages respect for Aboriginal heritage and a deeper sharing of values for our environment.

"The Curriculum provides an implicit social and emotional education, nurturing a sense of reverence for life, feelings of wonder and awe and a love of learning." (Gidley, 2009)





The Living Organism of our School

A school is more than a place for education. It is more than an organisation, a structure. It is a living organism, an organism that breathes, where the sum of its parts, when functioning in their health-giving way, gives health to the whole. There are many laws and systems which govern schools in order to maintain quality and wellbeing of students. In addition to those laws are the deeper, invisible laws that must govern any community of people - the laws of life, of human interaction, and of warmth.

Children

Our children are the most important ingredient - the heart and breath of the school. Without the children, our programs are empty vessels falling on barren ground. The children bring not only their bodies and minds, their joy and anticipation to learn about the world, but also they bring the seed of their destiny, which informs the future of the world. Our children also bring us the challenges which enable us to overcome our own limitations, and compel us to develop capacities we didn't have before, which in turn offers the best of human example and role modelling towards their education.

College of Teachers

The College of Teachers can be described as the persons that shine a light of insight and understanding to the developments of the children.

The College of Teachers, as an organ in the living body of the school, nurture the whole social organism of the classroom dynamics, and their role is not only to educate the children in the curriculum, but to also develop the deeper, 'other' curriculum of life - to pay attention to each child's developing self and to nourish that seed, to create fertile ground for that seed to grow into a community garden.

Our teachers are constantly developing their teaching practice in accordance with the needs of students at the school.

Parent Body

The parent body bring the children to the school, support the rhythms of the school and contribute to the school ethos, and also, importantly, the economic foundation to the school, through payment of fees.

Other contributions the parent body makes are through conscious volunteerism. Parents also contribute to the healthy organism of the school by communication with the different bodies in the school in healthy ways, for example, through attending parent meetings, giving supportive and constructive feedback regarding their experience in the school, and through staying aware of each other and of our huge efforts in continuing to evolve this young child we call our school.

Our parents offer an active voice in the wider community. Our vibrant parent group work tirelessly to create our newfound presence in the Southern Highlands.

Educational Management and Business Management – The Housekeeping Group

The role of the Housekeeping Group is much like that of the parents in the family, who offer their will to the successful and warm running of a household. Like a parent, this group is responsible for the day-to-day running of the household of the school, including the upholding of the rhythms and programs, but also practically, managing finances, addressing tasks, communicating with all bodies in the school, appointing the right teachers for the right class, liaising with our school authorities, and managing safety and other compliance areas of the school.

School Board – Southern Highlands Association for Steiner Education Inc.

The School Board can be likened to the creative mind, or the overseer of the whole organism. A Board of Directors is also a group of volunteers who are legally responsible for the continued

life of the school. The Board members sacrifice their time to make sure that the Housekeeping Group are looking after the school in the right way, from upholding the educational values right through into the classroom, to effective management of school funds, and most importantly, to the continued ability for the school to be able to legally exist as an entity. Without the tireless efforts of our Board, our school would not be able to exist!

The Board members of the Southern Highlands Association for Steiner Education Inc. recognise good governance as defined by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP):

'Good governance has eight major characteristics. It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimised, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society.'





From the Chairperson of the Board

This report marks nearly eighteen months since commencing our school in January 2013.

Again I acknowledge the focus and dedication of a very small team of people, and at the head of that team is Joanna Panagiotopoulos. Working tirelessly as teacher, parent, Board member and in a role reflecting that of Education Manager, she has recently accomplished the significant task of achieving a Board of Studies recommendation to the Minister, following their inspection on 1 May 2014, that our Classes 1 and 2 be extended to align with our Kindergarten, that is, that we have registration until 2018 for those classes, as well as provisional registration next year for Class 3.

This is such an enormous achievement and would not have happened without the devoted application to the task and in having others including myself step up to the task of preparing, reviewing and amending compliance documents, policies, curriculum and other material well beforehand.

Commendations also extend to our wonderful teachers, Annabel, Kate, Jenny and Joanna, and also to our parent group and their positive dedication to the children of this new generation. Closely behind our teachers stand the College of Teachers and behind them, dedicated mentors from the Steiner Education Australia and other Steiner schools; and so the whole Steiner family is to be acknowledged.

Without each of these groups, the school would not be what it is today – a flourishing and beautiful school. I thank each of you for every positive action and thought towards this school.

There have been challenges of course, most notably time constraints of the four Board members, all of whom have full time jobs in addition to their roles on the Board.

During the year each Board position has been supported by two people so as to minimise the tasks and keep ourselves accountable. Notably, Joanna and I have been Secretary and Deputy Secretary; and Francis and I have been Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer respectively. I take this opportunity of thanking Joe and Francis for their allegiance and commitment to the school including the preparation of a new schoolroom space, and for the many thousands of hours they have given to running the

school. They did all this while seamlessly maintaining the status quo for the children and managing good relationships with the landlord and neighbours. Their contribution has not gone unnoticed.

Shirley Bell has been overseas in teaching and mentoring roles for many months of 2013, however her steady hand and eye has been invaluable to keep our school on track spiritually and in alignment with the principles of Steiner education.

I would also like to acknowledge Peter Kazacos and the team at Kazcare, who gave generously to our initiative in many ways, rendering them as instrumental in the formation of the school. We look ahead to continued collaboration and growth.

Some of the parents have taken on delegated functions and I thank those parents who have offered to take on these important, challenging but meaningful and engaging activities that support the school in so many ways.

There is always more to be done and the steady hand of the Board and the College still reach out from time to time to guide the willing parent group so as to maintain connection to the community with the Steiner ethos. I thank the parent group for their dedication to our school.

Again, I wish to thank everyone for your countless contributions, however large or small, to our beautiful school.

Jane Button
Chair of the Board





From the Education Manager and College Chair

2013 will always live in the hearts and minds of this school community as the year of birth for the Southern Highlands Rudolf Steiner School. It is the year we opened our doors to eight families and began the Kindergarten rhythms that would lay the foundation for the years to come.

Looking back to the first day of school, Aurora Rose Kindergarten sang each child into the classroom with a welcome that will resound in the atmosphere of our growing school, for meeting each child as a unique and important being is the key to our educational community.

As a young school, 2013 was a year of first timers. There was a first time for everything, and like a small child learning to stand, then to walk, so too, we had to learn everything anew. We experienced many joys and tribulations, anxieties, hopes, immense challenges, incredible resilience, growth, and newfound capacity.

What does it mean to be a school working out of Steiner's impulses of education in today's educational climate? How do we work with leadership when we are like an extended family, in size and sentiment? How do we develop an educational program which is imbued with our core values, while also remaining coherent to the state syllabus?

These are some of the questions that were grappled with in 2013.

The school found its beginning through the tireless efforts of a small group of parents who had attended the Harmony Playgroup in the three years preceding the opening of the school. The Kindergarten group of students was a mix of those playgroup children who began their journey with Steiner Education from age three onwards, as well as new families who joined us from Sydney.

Dedicated parents and teachers worked to create stunning gardens around the school grounds, incorporating edible plants and herbs to use in the kitchen program as well as local native varieties.

A special foundation was laid at the school to celebrate and ensure its continuation in the memory of the founding year. Countless donations were given by ex-parents of the 'old' school that once lived on the Kazcare premises – from storybooks, toys,

to pieces of furniture for the Kindergarten, office and playground.

Our first goodbye to long-term friends came at Easter, at the close of Term 1, as we farewelled Tamara Da Silva as a member of staff. Tamara was instrumental in the work that led to the birth of the school, as well as joint management throughout the first term.

Our parents had their first time at creating an Autumn Open Day, with inspirations running high after the event, with so much hard effort bringing returns through the joy of shared work.

Following on into Term 2, the second great milestone was achieved through the extended registration of Kindergarten until 2018 by the NSW Board of Studies. We were also approved for provisional registration for Class 1 and 2 for 2014.

Key moments in our school year included the Apple Picking Harvest Festival at Moonacres Farm, the beautiful Whitsun Festival in May, where the children lit a candle for a loved one and spoke a verse in their mother tongue with a parent, the Midwinter spiral and bonfire, where the children and parents remembered the importance of fire in the Southern Highlands winter... and finally bringing the year to a close with two spring events, the Spring Michaelmas Festival, the Spring Picnic and finally our Advent Festival on the last day of school.

Each event, each meeting with a challenge, each small success and each question has become a way to meet the future, with deeper certainty on the place and value of diverse education in our times. Our staff are dedicated to continuing to develop the seeds of loving and imaginative education that aims to never lose sight that what matters most in the education of the child is something that already sleeps in the hearts and minds of the children, and they look to us with trust that we might help it to grow with utmost respect and encouragement.

Joanna Panagiotopoulos
Board of Directors
Acting Education Manager and College Chair



From the Parent Body

Overview

In its first year of operation, the school has been nourished and supported by the significant contributions of the parent body.

Like any new school, many aspects of the both the day-to-day functioning, along with the growth of the school, have relied on the invaluable input of the parents. The school wishes to acknowledge each and every parent who contributed to the school's first year of life. You have been the courageous, hardworking and visionary pioneers to lay solid foundations, from which others will benefit for many years to come.

It is traditional for Steiner schools to invite and encourage parent involvement in the life of the school. In the case of our new school, this voluntary parent contribution has spanned areas as diverse as cleaning, gardening, PR & communications, maintenance, events management, cooking, building, teaching, administration and the generous donation of many material items required by such a fledgling school.

With just eight families at the school in 2013, an informal parent body worked with the College of Teachers and the Board, to deliver enthusiastic and heartfelt support for a range of weekly, once-a-term and annual activities.

Weekly activities

Parents undertook weekly activities such as cleaning the school, planting and maintaining gardens, Friday afternoon lunch with the children, followed by teacher-led craft. In the second half of the year, a parent-run school information stall in the main street of Bowral was held, which provided local families with information on the school and sold Steiner education-related items. A fortnightly parent meeting also began in the second half of the

year, at which parents are able to provide feedback, ask questions and discuss anything relating to school life.

Term activities

The parent body was actively engaged in organising, attending and coordinating each term's calendar of activities, including a Repair & Maintenance day and Parent/Teacher night per term. Parents also contributed to organising and attended the many diverse school festivals held each term. These included a Harvest Festival held at a local apple orchard; Midwinter festival with bonfire and lantern walk; Whitsun festival; Michaelmas festival; and an end of year Advent/Christmas celebration.

Annual activities

The year was also punctuated by a series of one off events, at which the parents not only provided practical support and organisation, but also showed enormous commitment to the vision of the school and to its healthy future. These events included a ceremonial launch of the school during its first weeks, with the planting of a mandarin tree; an Autumn Open Day, showcasing the school's offerings; a Spring Picnic Day promoting the school; and a series of Information Talks in the final term, attended by prospective parents.

Parents were also involved in attending excursions, bushwalks and other one-off activities, providing valuable logistic support and holding of the school's first year of operation.

Ellen Stuebe

Parent

Marketing and Communications Strategy





Teaching Staff

We are indeed fortunate to have a dedicated team of teachers forming our College of Teachers, all of whom are fully qualified and accredited, with additional training in Steiner education.

Annabel Brown **Kindergarten Teacher 2013**

Annabel Brown holds a Bachelor Degree in Social Inquiry from UTS and Graduate Diploma of Teaching and Learning from Charles Darwin University. From her position as Kindergarten Teacher at Chrysalis Steiner School in Bellingen, Annabel returned in 2013 to her hometown in the Highlands with a fiery commitment to bring a new school to life - a school that truly serves the needs of children today.

"In our rapidly fragmenting and evolving world, it's connection that matters most for our children. Connection to the earth, to ancestors and community, connection to self, connection to cosmos and Life. Without this we are so easily lost. If we can surround our children with rich meaning, with mindful presence and beauty and unhurried trust, then that connection- which is in fact their natural inheritance – can unfold as a lifelong gift. From that gift spring the resilience, the resourcefulness, the initiative and courage and heartfelt intelligence that are so essential at this time."

"I'm deeply thankful for my own experience of Steiner education as a child, and every day I come to understand more about its relevance and wisdom. Taking a stand for the value of childhood, forming new ways of being in community, preparing tomorrow's adults for whatever comes: Steiner education is one way- and the best way I know - of doing these things."

Of the first year of the school's life, Annabel says:

"We are all so fortunate to be playing part in the formation of this school, this educational community. Every day has brought so many challenges and so many joys. And every day we have done something for the very first time! Children and adults side by side, we are forging a way that is vibrant and unique and really very special. The kids are learning what it is to build something new, to be part of something we all care about, and I believe they will carry this experience powerfully into their futures."



Kate Koch

Kindergarten Assistant 2013

Kate Koch has over thirteen years of teaching experience, including many years at the previous Bowral Steiner School. She holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree, a Graduate Diploma in Teaching, and recently completed her Masters in Art Psychotherapy.

Having assisted in the Kindergarten throughout the first year of the school's operation in 2013, Kate says she is delighted to be appointed teacher in the very first year of primary schooling being offered by the new school during 2014.

"The early years of a child's education are vital", she says. "They form the foundation on which their future lives are built. So it is an honour and a great pleasure to be bringing Steiner education back to the children of the Highlands. I look forward to the start of the new school year with great anticipation", Kate says.

Jennifer Lloyd

Craft Teacher and Relief 2013

Jennifer's initial teaching experience was as a Junior Primary/ Kindergarten Diploma trained teacher in country and urban South Australia where she taught for 4 years with side training in teaching Music, Movement and Drama and Children's Art classes through private teachers who ran their own schools.

Since 1972 she has been training and subsequently practicing as an artist with a focus on personal development, gaining a Graduate Diploma in Social Ecology as well as an Honours Degree in Visual Arts. She was registered as a relief teacher with the NSW DEC, and over the years she has conducted a variety of arts projects in schools.

As a Parent at Eukarima/ Bowral Rudolf Steiner School Jennifer offered such activities as silk painting workshops and costume making in addition to teaching craft for one year.

After more study Jennifer also taught Ceramics at Moss Vale TAFE for two semesters and worked in the Sturt Gallery pottery for four months as an emerging artist.

In recent years Jennifer has volunteered as Secretary for the Vietnam Children's Project which sponsors an orphanage and three Steiner based Kindergartens in Vietnam.

During 2013, Jennifer has renewed her interest in the philosophical basis for Steiner education, and has undertaken studies including 'An Introduction to Anthroposophy' where she has attended a number of talks, classes and workshops that enhance this interest.

She is now working to contribute in a rich and worthwhile way towards our new and developing Steiner school based community.



Our highest endeavor must be to develop free human beings who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives. The need for imagination, a sense of truth, and a feeling of responsibility—these three forces are the very nerve of education.

Rudolf Steiner

Professional Learning Summary

In 2013, staff participated in the following professional development activities:

Study Course: An Introduction to Anthroposophy

Throughout 2013

Attending: Jenny Lloyd

**Sydney Rudolf Steiner College Foundation Studies:
Introduction to Steiner Education, Inner
Development, Eurythmy, Recorder, Painting &
Drawing**

Throughout 2013

Attending: Jenny Lloyd

**College of Teachers Meetings with Artistic
Development & Book Study**

Weekly sessions throughout term time 2013

Attending: Annabel Brown, Kate Koch, Jenny Lloyd,
Joanna Panagiotopoulos

Child Study Sessions X 12

Throughout 2013

Attending: Annabel Brown, Kate Koch, Jenny Lloyd

Mentorship Sessions with Shirley Bell

Weekly throughout Term 1 2013

Attending: Annabel Brown

**Consultations on the Life of the School with
Benjamin Cherry**

17th & 18th January 2013

Attending: Shirley Bell, Annabel Brown, Jane Button,
Tamara Da Silva, Francis Mougel, Joanna
Panagiotopoulos

**Establishing the Kindergarten Rhythm with Thanh
Cherry**

22nd January 2013

Attending: Shirley Bell, Annabel Brown, Tamara Da Silva,
Joanna Panagiotopoulos

**Supporting Children's Special Needs- Consultations
with AIS specialist educator Sue Cairns**

1st March, 13th March, 28th November 2013

Attending: Annabel Brown, Joanna Panagiotopoulos

Anthroposophical Homecare Workshop

8th March 2013

Attending: Annabel Brown, Kate Koch, Jenny Lloyd,
Joanna Panagiotopoulos

An Introduction to Child Study with Thanh Cherry

14th March 2013

Attending: Shirley Bell, Annabel Brown, Tamara Da Silva,
Kate Koch, Jenny Lloyd, Joanna Panagiotopoulos

Growing the Roots of Our School with Lisa Devine

20th March 2013

Attending: Annabel Brown, Jane Button, Tamara Da
Silva, Kate Koch, Jenny Lloyd, Francis Mougel, Joanna
Panagiotopoulos

Vital Years Conference: Rhythm and the Young Child

7th-12th July 2013

Attending: Annabel Brown, Kate Koch, Jenny Lloyd

Louise de Forest Workshop: The Wonder of Boys

3rd August 2013

Attending: Annabel Brown, Kate Koch, Jenny Lloyd

AIS Child Protection Training

17th September 2013

Attending: Annabel Brown, Jane Button, Kate Koch,
Joanna Panagiotopoulos

**Christopher Schaefer Lecture: Rudolf Steiner as
Social Activist**

18th September 2013

Attending: Annabel Brown, Jenny Lloyd

**Steiner Education Australia Governance, Leadership
& Management Conference**

20th & 21st September 2013

Attending: Kate Koch

**Building our School Community: Key Policy &
Procedure Refresher Session**

5th November 2013

Attending: Annabel Brown, Jane Button, Kate Koch,
Jenny Lloyd, Francis Mougel, Joanna Panagiotopoulos

The Student Cohort

In 2013, the school opened with a Kindergarten class of eight children, all aged 5-6, one of whom left the school in mid Term 1. Seven children- two girls and five boys- completed the year. Of these, five of the children had been attending the Steiner Playgroup or Playtime at the Harmony Centre together since they were small, and the two children who moved from Sydney had attended another Steiner school together. Thus the children were already familiar with one another and with many aspects of school life. Interestingly, six of the children were from one-child households, and the group soon came to function with the closeness and intensity of a family unit during our school days. Through the course of the year, several children experienced major transitions in their home lives, and many parents reflected on the stability and cohesion that their children were able to experience through the school.

Special characteristics of this founding student group have been a shared love of language play, pride in their diverse cultural heritages, sophisticated skill in design and construction, and a keen interest in the natural world.



Student Achievement

Seven students completed the Kindergarten program in 2013. A range of formative and summative assessment methods were used to track the children's learning and development, including day-to-day teacher observations and anecdotal records, tracking via regular skills and outcomes rubrics, and formal Class 1 Readiness assessments.

End-of-Year Reports indicated each student's development across all six Key Learning Areas, plus Social & Emotional Development and Play Skills. In English, students consistently achieved the Accomplished grading in Talking and Listening, and, as anticipated at this stage, scored Satisfactory or Working Towards gradings in Reading and Writing. Across the various sub-strands of Mathematics, the Satisfactory grading was prevalent. Student achievement was particularly strong in the areas of both Science & Technology and Human Society & its Environment, owing to the group's keen interest in diverse cultures, the natural world, and construction and design. Most students matched the Accomplished descriptor in each of these KLAs. In Creative Arts and also Personal Development, Health & Physical Education, students achieved similarly high levels of competence. Around Social & Emotional Development and Play Skills, each student demonstrated Accomplished and Working Beyond levels in relation to many outcomes, yet were Working Towards or In Need of Support in certain areas specific to each child.



Goals for 2014: Key Targets for Improvement

Deepening student learning

- Establishing a composite class that functions well as a cohesive school group and maintains the integrity of the Steiner curriculum, at the same time as serving the diverse learning needs of the students
- Working in partnership with families to ensure that the children receive the greatest possible benefit from this education, through offering a continuing parent education program, regular parent-teacher communications, and opportunities for parents to experience aspects of classroom life
- Professional development and mentoring support to enhance teachers' capacity to serve students' special learning needs
- Protecting classrooms from disruption by creating school tour dates and an orientation program as suitable occasions for prospective families to visit
- Strengthening the school community's connection with local indigenous culture through sessions with indigenous educators, staff professional development, and the integration of indigenous perspectives through our curriculum
- Making ecological education visible as a key aspect of our curriculum, central to our school ethos
- Further establishing Chinese and German as additional languages in our school
- Supporting student wellbeing through clean and punctual transitions at the beginning and end of the school day
- Embedding quality music in our school culture by further integrating it in our curriculum, and including parent and teacher musical contributions at festivals and special events

- Undertaking a Child Study process for all Kindergarten students

Strengthening our community

- Strengthening the flow of communication between the parent body and the school's management and teaching staff through regular meeting opportunities and exploring the establishment of a parent communication conduit role
- Animating the school community through regular parent craft groups and working groups that harness the key skills and passions of parents in support of school endeavours
- Promoting the wellbeing of staff and parents as fundamental to the children's optimal health and learning

Running the school in light of emerging needs

- Attracting new Association members, including potential Board members, with the appropriate skill sets that are needed to serve in the governance of the school into the future
- Achieving Board of Studies Accreditation for the school to expand to Class 2/3 in 2015
- Deepening the quality and effectiveness of regular College meetings
- Creating a volunteer role for an enrolment enquiries coordinator
- Creating a paid office support position
- Actively preparing for the smooth handover of key areas of responsibility to future administration and management staff
- Furthering positive relationships with staff and tenants of Kazcare facilities
- Utilising Edumate and other web-based systems to streamline all educational and administrative documentation

Growing our school

- Developing a cohesive Communications & Marketing Strategy to guide all promotional activity over the coming years
- Attracting new enrolments for 2014 and 2015 so as to reach more families with this education, expand the students' peer group and ensure the financial health of the school
- Making the school more accessible for more families by moving towards a new fee structure
- Offering a range of public events that promote the school to potential families, convey the essence of the education we offer, and contribute to the vitality of the wider community
- Building a strong foundation for our future school community by strengthening ties with the Harmony Steiner Playgroup and exploring ways to offer anthroposophically-based support and inspiration to the parents of babies and young children



Attendance and Retention Rates

Attendance

The average daily student attendance rate in 2013 was 90.6%

How the school manages non-attendance

The school recognises that a child's school attendance is compulsory. Parents are provided with the school attendance policy at orientation or soon thereafter and this is also discussed with the parents at the child's enrolment interview.

The school has in place a policy, reviewed annually, regarding non-attendance. An attendance register is maintained on a daily basis.

Parents of students are required to report their child's absence as soon as practicable after the absence is known. Where absence has become frequent, meetings are conducted with parents to ascertain whether any difficulties have arisen that the school and parents can work through together.

Mandatory reporting procedures apply where absences are extended or the student may be at risk of significant harm through school absence.

Student Retention

Year	Start Year	Finish Year	Out During Year	In During year
2013	8	7	1	0

Respect and Responsibility

The Southern Highlands Rudolf Steiner School intends that all students feel they are valued. Parents and teachers work together to provide care and support, thus engendering self esteem, mutual respect and responsibility.

The Board has developed policies and procedures within their 'Safe and Supportive Environment' and 'Student Welfare' goals, to ensure that respect and responsibility comes through clearly for students, teachers, parents and the community in which the school resides. These policies are publicly available to parents on the school's website and are reviewed annually.

In addition to regular parent teacher meetings, the Board and College hold regular meetings for parents to discuss the basis for these policies and the framework in which the policies have been created, so as to educate the school community in how these are to work. These policies are developed with the aim of promoting respect and responsibility among students, parents, teachers and the wider community.





Key School Codes, Policies and Procedures

Student Wellbeing

Pastoral Care at the Southern Highlands Rudolf Steiner School is based on the philosophy and core values underpinning Steiner education and the school. It is holistic in nature, recognising that the social and emotional wellbeing of young people needs to be addressed along with intellectual and physical wellbeing. The promotion of wellbeing is integral to young people's schooling outcomes, their social development and their capacity to contribute to their families, the community and the workforce. The creative, artistic and imaginative aspects of Steiner education provide opportunities for participation, communication, engagement and expression that can increase student's self esteem and build a protective connectedness to the school community.

Southern Highlands Rudolf Steiner School seeks to provide quality education for all students taking account of their age, background, ability and interests. As a Steiner school, we believe:

'Our highest endeavour is to develop individuals who are able out of their own initiative to impart purpose and direction to their lives' Rudolf Steiner

We follow the 'Three Golden Rules for Teachers' to:

'Receive each child in gratitude from the world they come from; educate each child with love; lead each child into the true freedom that belongs to human beings' Rudolf Steiner

A comprehensive body of formal documents serve to guide many aspects of school life. All are available on the school's website. Each year, they are reviewed and updated to ensure that they are in true alignment with the school's values and practices. Below are excerpts from a range of key documents relating to student wellbeing, the conduct of all school community members, complaints and grievances, and enrolments.

Student Rules and Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure

This policy provides a framework to guide students and parents on the school's approach to acceptable behaviour to ensure that a positive and productive learning environment is maintained for all students. Descriptions of behaviours that are acceptable and not acceptable are provided in areas such as respect towards others, completion of homework, care for the environment, care of personal belongings and public behaviour. School Rules are also set out in this policy.

Policy and Code of Conduct for Parents, Guardians, School Community

In addition to the Code of Conduct for Students, a Code of Conduct has been developed to encompass all community members who may contribute to the development of the child's education or be associated with the school. The Policy and Code of Conduct for Parents and Guardians is developed on reasonable community expectations of behaviour encompassing mutual tolerance, respect and personal safety of all with the goal of making the school a safe and pleasant environment for all our community.

Promoting Positive Behaviour and Discipline

Bullying conduct is not tolerated in our school. Anti-bullying policies concerning staff are located within the Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Statement for Employees, Contractors and Volunteers.

Anti-bullying policies concerning students are located within the Behaviour Management and Discipline Policy as well as the Codes of Conduct for Students, and for Parents, Guardians and the Community.

Discipline Policy

Under the school's Discipline Policy, students are required to abide by the School Rules and Codes of Conduct and to follow the directions of teachers and other people with authority delegated by the school.

Where a student disregards rules, disobeys instructions or otherwise engages in conduct, which causes or may cause harm,



the student may be subject to disciplinary action and required to engage in considered restorative practices.

The disciplinary procedures undertaken and restorative practices required by the school vary according to the seriousness of the alleged offence. When advised of an allegation the student and parents will be informed of the procedural steps to be followed in dealing with the matter. In relation to all matters to be investigated, the student will be informed of the nature of the allegation and given an opportunity to respond to the allegations.

The School's Complaints and Grievances Policy

Southern Highlands Rudolf Steiner School is committed to providing a work and study environment that is safe, fair and free from discrimination for all members of the school community. The school has a responsibility under State and Federal legislation to ensure staff and students are not subjected to behaviour that may constitute discrimination, harassment, vilification or victimisation. An essential part of developing that environment is ensuring that students and parents are encouraged to come forward with their matters of concern and grievances in the knowledge that the responsible staff will take prompt and effective action to address these concerns. Grievances that are not addressed have the potential to grow into major problems that can cause tension, low morale and reduced learning and academic achievement.

In line with this aim, the school has developed a Grievances Framework, which is downloadable from the school website. This Framework was developed so that parents, students and other members of the community know to whom to take their particular concern and how they can expect their concern to be addressed.

Enrolment Policies and pre-requisites for continuing enrolment

Southern Highlands Rudolf Steiner School is a co-educational primary school providing an education based on the philosophy and values of Steiner education and like all NSW schools, we are approved by the NSW Board of Studies. All applications will be processed in order of receipt and consideration will be given to the applicant's support for the ethos of the school, siblings already enrolled in the school and other criteria determined by the school from time to time. 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 are also expected to be supportive of the ethos of the school.

Enrolment Procedures

Information

We offer all prospective parents the following information by email, fax or mail:

- Southern Highlands Rudolf Steiner School Prospectus
- Relevant Handbooks and/or access to School Policies via the website
- Current Newsletter
- An invitation to attend the next School Tour. Tours are held regularly through the year.

Enrolment Procedures for Kindergarten in the Current Year and Classes 1 - 6

Application for Enrolment

Parents are to complete the Southern Highlands Rudolf Steiner School Enrolment Application Form.

Receipt of Application Form, Documentation and Application Fee

Receipt of the Application Form, Application Fee and attached documentation, will be acknowledged by telephone, email or mail. If a place is available, the school will forward an invitation to attend an interview with the Class Teacher and Education Manager or their nominee. If a place is not available, the child's name will be added to the Waiting for Interview List. Prospective parents will be informed of this, and contacted for an interview once a place becomes available.

Interview with Class Teacher and Education Manager

Both the parent/s or guardian/s and the student are required to attend an initial interview with the Class Teacher and Education Manager or their nominee at which all aspects of the student's education at Southern Highlands Rudolf Steiner School will be discussed including the financial requirements of the school, fees and charges. It is expected that parent/s or guardian/s and the Education Manager or their nominee will have some private time during the interview. Parents are to make arrangements for younger students to be cared for while this happens. During this interview a start date may or may not be nominated and subsequent interviews may be requested.

Letter of Offer

If a place is available for the nominated start date, a Letter of Offer will be forwarded to the applicant.

Acceptance of Offer Form and Acceptance Fee

The Acceptance of Offer Form together with a non-refundable Enrolment Fee of \$625 must be returned to the school within 14 days of receipt of the offer. Payment of this fee reserves a place for the applicant's child to commence at the nominated time. If the offer is not accepted, then it will lapse. Upon receiving the Acceptance of Offer Form, parents will be required to read and accept the School's Policies and Procedures which can be accessed online via the school website with a password. After reading the policies parents will need to fill in the Conditions of Enrolment Form to indicate that they have read and understood the school's policies, and return this checklist together with a non-refundable Enrolment Fee of \$625.

Payment of Fees and Charges

The first term's Fees, Consolidated Charges and Other 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 their existing account and invoiced accordingly.

Overview of School Policies and Procedures

Compliance Document Title	Location
Fee Payment Policy	C:\Documents and Settings\PC\Desktop\SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Attendance\Fee Payment Policy.docx
SHRSS Enrolment Policy	C:\Documents and Settings\PC\Desktop\SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Attendance\SHRSS Student Attendance Policy.docx
SHRSS Student Attendance Policy	C:\Documents and Settings\PC\Desktop\SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Attendance\SHRSS Student Attendance Policy.pdf
SHRSS Assessment & Reporting Policy & Procedure	C:\Documents and Settings\PC\Desktop\SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Curriculum\SHRSS Assessment and Reporting Policy and Procedure.docx
SHRSS Homework Policy	C:\Documents and Settings\PC\Desktop\SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Curriculum\SHRSS Homework Policy.docx

SHRSS Building & Facilities Policy	C:\Documents and Settings\PC\Desktop\SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Premises and Buildings\SHRSS Buildings and Facilities Policy.pdf
SHRSS Educational & Financial Reporting Policy	C:\Documents and Settings\PC\Desktop\SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Education and Financial Reporting\SHRSS Educational and Financial Reporting Policy.pdf
SHRSS Emergency Lockdown Procedure	C:\Documents and Settings\PC\Desktop\SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Safe and Supportive Environment Student Welfare 1\SHRSS Emergency Lockdown Procedure.pdf
SHRSS Excursion & Camps Policy & Procedure	C:\Documents and Settings\PC\Desktop\SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Safe and Supportive Environment Student Welfare 1\SHRSS Excursions and Camps Policy and Procedure.pdf
SHRSS Medical Treatment Policy & Procedure	C:\Documents and Settings\PC\Desktop\SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Safe and Supportive Environment Student Welfare 1\SHRSS Medical Treatment Policy and Procedure.pdf
SHRSS Security & After Hours Access Policy & Procedure	C:\Documents and Settings\PC\Desktop\SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Safe and Supportive Environment Student Welfare 1\SHRSS Security and After Hours Access Policy and Procedure.pdf
SHRSS Student Supervision Policy & Procedure	C:\Documents and Settings\PC\Desktop\SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Safe and Supportive Environment Student Welfare 1\SHRSS Student Supervision Policy and Procedure.docx
SHRSS Student Wellbeing, Pastoral Care, & Leadership Policy	C:\Documents and Settings\PC\Desktop\SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Safe and Supportive Environment Student Welfare 1\SHRSS Student Wellbeing, Pastoral Care and Leadership Policy.docx
SHRRS Child Protection Policy	SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Safe and Supportive Environment Legislative Obligations\SHRRS Child Protection Policy and Procedure.pdf
SHRSS Privacy Policy	SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Safe and Supportive Environment Legislative Obligations\SHRSS Privacy Policy.docx
SHRSS Risk Assessment Procedure	SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Safe and Supportive Environment Legislative Obligations\SHRSS Risk Assessment Procedure.docx

SHRSS Work Health & Safety Policy	SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Safe and Supportive Environment Legislative Obligations\SHRSS Work Health and Safety Policy.docx
SHRSS Code of Conduct for Parents, Guardians & School Community	SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Safe and Supportive Environment Student Welfare 2\SHRSS Code of Conduct for Parents, Guardians and School Community.pdf
SHRSS Communications Framework	SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Safe and Supportive Environment Student Welfare 2\SHRSS Communications Framework.pdf
SHRSS Communications Policy & Procedure	SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Safe and Supportive Environment Student Welfare 2\SHRSS Communications Policy and Procedure.pdf
SHRSS Complaints, Grievance Resolution Policy	SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Safe and Supportive Environment Student Welfare 2\SHRSS Complaints and Grievance Resolution Policy and Procedure.pdf
SHRSS Critical Incident Management Policy	SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Safe and Supportive Environment Student Welfare 2\SHRSS Critical Incident Management Policy and Procedure.pdf
SHRSS Students Wellbeing & Pastoral Care & Leadership Policy	SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Safe and Supportive Environment Student Welfare 2\SHRSS Student Wellbeing, Pastoral Care and Leadership Policy.pdf
SHRSS Student Wellbeing, Pastoral Care & Leadership Procedure	SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Safe and Supportive Environment Student Welfare 2\SHRSS Student Wellbeing, Pastoral Care and Leadership Procedure.pdf
SHRSS Staff Code Of Conduct	C:\Documents and Settings\PC\Desktop \SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Staff\SHRSS Staff Code of Conduct.pdf
SHRSS Staff Use of Email, Technology & Social Media Policy	C:\Documents and Settings\PC\Desktop \SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Staff\SHRSS Use of Email, Technology and Social Media.docx
SHRSS Student Code of Conduct	..\SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Discipline\SHRRS Student Code of Conduct.pdf
SHRSS Behaviour Management & Discipline	..\SHASE\Policies 2014 and Compliance Docs\Discipline\SHRSS Behaviour Management and Discipline.pdf



Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

Parents, teachers and students are involved in many aspects of school life. This involvement is welcomed and encouraged. A host of parent and student initiatives occurred throughout 2013 including market days, cultural days, fund raising events, marketing and communications, parent information education, parent involvement in classes and more.

One key example of parent-student-teacher interaction is the Friday lesson which involves the children preparing lunch for their parents, and after lunch, going on a nature walk with their parents and teachers.

Another initiative for parent consultation is the instigation of Friday parent meetings. This is an initiative of the Education Manager who has created this fortnightly opportunity for parents to meet her, either individually or as a group, and have their questions answered, raise concerns or give feedback on their child's education.

Parent testimonials

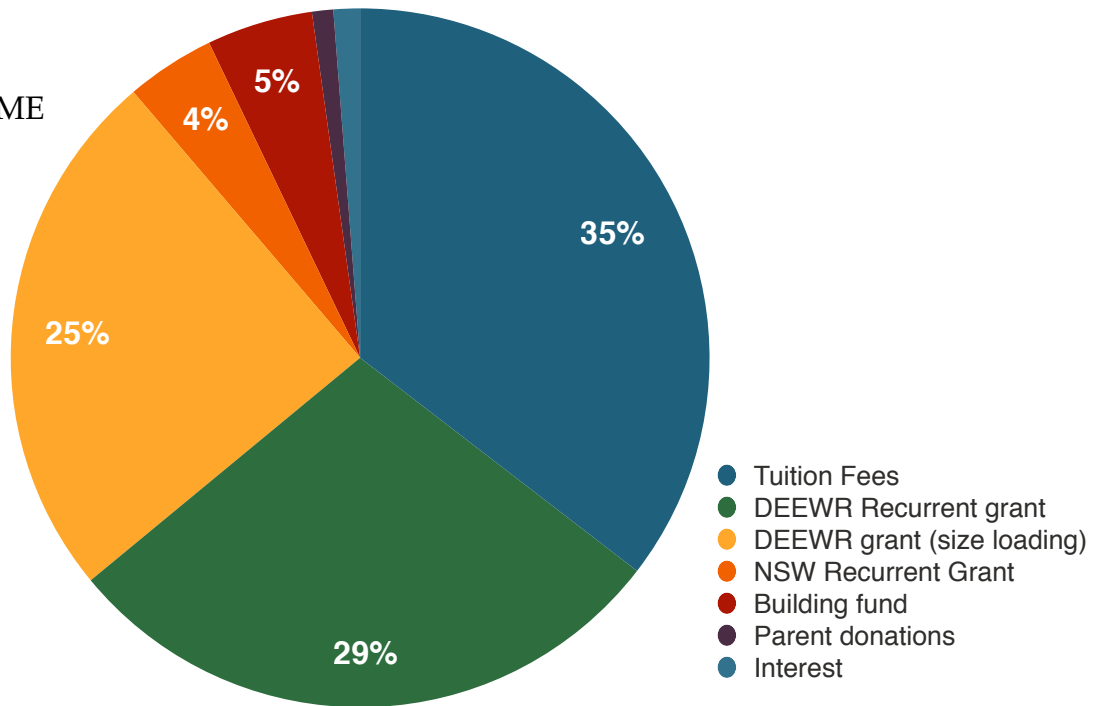
'I just wanted to say a big thank you to all the children, you, Annabel and Kate and for the wonderful hours... it gladdened my heart and inspired me in a very nourishing way. It was so beautiful to see the children play, share and interact in such a free and nurturing space.'

'My son is flourishing in a nurturing environment which expands his senses, nurtures his skills and proclivities, listens to his expression of self and embraces him as a valuable part of a warm community. Annabel, his teacher, celebrates the vitality in the children she cares for while holding boundaries that convey a sense of safety. She applies extraordinary kindness, commitment and resourcefulness to her role. I can't imagine a more supportive or inspiring environment for my son to begin his educational life.'

Initially I was questioning whether my son needed Steiner. Did he really need to go there? I am so grateful he did, everyday, he is like a different boy. This type of education has been a fork in the road for him - his interest in life and learning is somehow different now, it expands and expands. Maybe that is the word for this type of education; an education of "expansion", not "constriction".



INCOME



EXPENDITURE

