

Linuwel School Annual Report 2017

This annual school report has been compiled to meet the reporting requirements of the Commonwealth & NSW State Governments, and only addresses those aspects of the school's operation relevant to these requirements.

1. Message from the school Board of Directors.

2017 saw the completion of the Senior Studies building and the successful implementation of the first Year 11 program. Students and their parents have appreciated the opportunity to continue their education with a focus on a variety of pathways into the workforce or tertiary education without a focus on the HSC exam. Registration for Years 11 and 12 was granted to 2020 to align with the registration period for the school.

The introduction of the Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan, a NSW state initiative implemented by AISNSW, into the school in 2017 has been a great success. The outstanding professional development and guidance provided by the AIS consultants has enabled the school's leadership team upskill and ensure the benefits of the program will continue to flow through the school. It has had an immediate effect on the effective teaching of literacy and numeracy and the learning outcomes for the students.

Despite an increase in staffing costs to provide more learning support across the school, the school achieved an operating surplus for the year and remains in a sound financial position.

In view of the fact that there is little room for any further building development on the site, the Board decided to purchase the adjoining residential property when it became available, for future use by the school.

2. Contextual Information about the School

This can be accessed from the MySchool website: <http://www.myschool.edu.au>

3. Student performance in national & state-wide tests

Students are not assessed for the NSW RoSA or the HSC.

Student performance on NAPLAN is available on the MySchool website:

<http://www.myschool.edu.au>

4. Senior secondary outcomes

The school does not have HSC students.

5. Professional learning & teacher standards

Of the 26 teaching staff, 24 are fully qualified. One is currently completing their teaching qualification and one has a bachelor degree but no formal teaching qualification.

Accreditation status:

Proficient/pre 2004 – 18

Provisional – 7

Conditional – 1

In 2017 teacher appraisal was focused on teacher observation and feedback in relation to implementation of the explicit teaching model associated with the LNAP program. In addition the Principal observed and gave feedback to each teacher at some stage through the year.

All staff participated in a range of professional learning activities during the year, from in-school sharing and collaboration on the various pedagogical aspects of teaching, learning and assessing, to a variety of externally provided courses, conferences and seminars covering areas including:

Explicit teaching for literacy and numeracy

Primary class-specific content and pedagogy for all KLAs for the ASCF

Secondary year-specific and subject-specific content and strategies for the ASCF
Governance, Leadership and Management for the executive

Identifying and responding to children and young people at risk.

AIS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Conference

Learning Difficulties Australia conference

The attendees present and discuss what they have learned with the rest of the staff so that all the teachers can benefit and develop their professional knowledge and skills.

6. Workforce Composition

This can be accessed from the MySchool website: <http://www.myschool.edu.au>

7. Student attendance & retention rates

School attendance data can be found on the Myschool website

<http://www.myschool.edu.au>

Year group attendance rates were as follows:

Kinder	91%
Yr 1	93%
Yr 2	88%
Yr 3	92%
Yr 4	87%
Yr 5	88%
Yr 6	91%
Yr 7	93%
Yr 8	87%
Yr 9	87%
Yr 10	93%
Yr 11	91%
Whole of school	91%

All cases of non-attendance are followed up for a reason of absence. Absences are monitored and discussed with parents if a concern arises. Policies and procedures have been implemented around approving applications for leave and exemption from attendance.

Mandatory reporting procedures may apply where there are high levels of absenteeism.

The school had no students completing Year 12 in 2017.

8. Enrolment Policy

About 24 children can be accepted into each Kindergarten year group. When accepting an enrolment the Kindergarten teacher may consider: the date of application; the enrolment of siblings in the school; and the parent(s)' demonstrated commitment to Rudolf Steiner education. A diversity of backgrounds is welcomed within the school.

Acceptance of additional students into classes 1-10 is at the discretion of the teacher, taking into consideration the dynamics of the class as well as the factors above. In the case of students entering Years 7-10, enrolment is probationary for six months, i.e. during or at the end of that time the class teacher can cancel the enrolment if the student is not integrating successfully into the class and school.

Enrolment occurs after an interview process. Initially prospective parents will be given a copy of the "Information for Parents" brochure or directed to the website. If they wish to continue with an enrolment application, a meeting is arranged with the relevant class teacher at the school, with the child also being present. At this meeting the parents and child see the school environs and classrooms and are introduced to the operation of the school and basic principles of Steiner education. In turn the teacher learns about the child and is informed of any factors which may have a bearing on the child's school life. If the teacher is willing to accept the child and the parents want to enrol him or her, an enrolment form is issued. If there is no place currently available but the teacher would otherwise accept the child then the child's name is placed on a waiting list.

On receipt of the signed enrolment form and a non-refundable enrolment fee of \$200 the child's place is secured. A bond of \$600 is payable to the school during the term prior to the child's starting date. This will be refunded when the child leaves the school, less any deductions for unpaid fees or charges. The first term's fees must be paid before the child starts at the school. The teacher will contact the parents if there are any further details or arrangements to be discussed.

Applicants for enrolment will be treated in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act. The school has some students with special needs. Students of all cultural, religious and socio-economic backgrounds are welcomed.

Continuing enrolment is dependent on students abiding by the school's requirements regarding behaviour, satisfactory attendance, compliance with dress codes, and parents abiding by the school requirements agreed at enrolment, including payment of fees, contained in the 'Information for Parents' document available on the school website, www.linuwel.nsw.edu.au.

Characteristics of the school body can be accessed on the MySchool website :
<http://www.myschool.edu.au>

9. School Policies

(a) Student welfare.

The school aims to provide an environment where learning & personal development can most effectively take place and which is safe, supportive and pleasant for students and staff.

Protecting students from possible abuse and harm is a high priority for all staff. Staff are responsible for being alert to possible cases and responding appropriately in accordance with the relevant child protection legislation. Staff are aware of their duty of care obligations to keep students safe, and for ensuring students are adequately supervised at all times. Detailed guidelines are provided for assessing and managing risks when the students undertake activities off the school site. WHS policies and procedures are regularly reviewed. Students' well-being is centred around the provision of a safe and supportive environment in which the student has the one class teacher through the primary years and another for Years 7-12. Close co-operation and communication between parents and teachers is encouraged at all times. Being a small school enables close monitoring of the whole school environment and early awareness of potential issues affecting student welfare. Guidelines for the use of social media and other forms of e-communication promote respectful and appropriate use of IT.

The full text of policies is contained in the school's "Information for Parents" document and the "Education Staff Guidelines", which can be obtained from the school.

Child protection policies have been revised and strengthened, as have some procedures relating to off-campus activities.

(b) Bullying

All members of the school community have the right to a learning and work environment free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt. We all share a responsibility to foster, promote and restore right relationships. Bullying is unacceptable and we [students, staff and parents] all share a responsibility for preventing it.

Staff members are to be vigilant in monitoring student behaviour for unsafe behaviour and especially for indications of bullying. Incidences of bullying or suspected bullying are to be treated as a serious incident, carefully investigated and appropriate action taken. The perpetrator(s) are to be made aware that it is a zero-tolerance activity within the school and will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence. This policy includes a guide to rights and responsibilities.

The 'Anti-bullying Statement and Anti-harassment Statement and Guidelines' has been further updated in 2017 to clarify definitions, prevention strategies and response procedures.

The full text of the policies can be obtained by contacting the school.

(c) Student discipline

School discipline stems from the long- term relationship which develops between the student and their class teacher, based on the teacher's understanding of child development and deep concern for each individual. Student co-operation is sought through making expectations clear and being consistent in ensuring those expectations are met. Where co-operation is not being obtained, teachers liaise with parents to overcome the problem. Corporal punishment is not permitted at the school, nor sanctioned in any circumstances. The policy has been expanded to clarify circumstances under which a student may be excluded from school. The policy is based on the principles of procedural fairness and parents are always

included in any disciplinary process. The full policy is contained in the school's "Information for Parents" document, which can be obtained from the school, or from the School's website: www.linuwel.nsw.edu.au
There have been no changes to the policies this year.

(d) Complaints and grievances.

Any concerns, complaints or grievances, which a parent has, are raised with the child's class teacher. If a parent feels that there are issues which are not being resolved or which they cannot raise with the class teacher they are welcome to approach the principal or another senior member of staff who will mediate between the parent (s) and teacher to resolve the issue. If the issue still cannot be resolved the parent can contact the Chair of the school's Board of Directors for a determination of how it will be finalized. There have been no changes to the policy during the last year. The full text of policies is contained in the school's "Information for Parents" document, which can be obtained from the school.

10. School-determined priority areas for improvement.

Focus areas for 2017 included:

- (i) commencement and ongoing evaluation of the program for the first Year 11 class. *The year was successfully completed with some adjustments made to the program.*
- (ii) ongoing review and refinement of school policies and procedures. *An assistant with legal experience continues to review and update school policies and procedures and incorporate new policies in response to perceived or experienced omissions in the policy suite.*
- (iii) participation in the LNAP and the associated development of instructional leadership capacity and teacher skills in teaching literacy and numeracy, especially in the early years. *Implementation of the LNAP has been well-received and highly successful with teachers incorporating screeners, progressions and explicit teaching into their work. Indications are that gaps in students' learning have been identified and in many cases successfully addressed through the strategies introduced in the program.*
- (iv) further work on the RAP. *The RAP has been completed and accepted, and used as an example for other schools.*
- (v) development of the school's capacity to provide student and staff well-being support. *A dedicated part-time well-being person has been able to provide valuable support for a number of students and staff members. Work has commenced on the collaborative development of strategies to promote student and staff wellbeing.*

Priority areas for 2018 include:

- (i) Successful implementation of the initial Year 12 program.
- (ii) Further upskilling of the leaders of the LNAP and the teaching staff, and the gradual implementation of the teaching method across the school.
- (iii) Curriculum development to incorporate the teaching method into the curriculum in a way that complements the Steiner pedagogy.

- (iv) Expanding the opportunities for creative, problem-solving play in the primary school recreation area.
- (v) Creation of formal primary and secondary coordinator positions and development of duty statements.
- (vi) Evaluation of potential student management systems for future implementation.

11. Promoting respect and responsibility

All students are made aware of and are expected to abide by the Student Code of Conduct. This clearly outlines their rights, and reciprocal responsibilities, including the respect due to property, staff, fellow students, and people and property generally. Staff lead by example and are vigilant in taking constructive action when necessary. They also nurture an appreciation for the school environment and interaction with, and acceptance among, the entire student population through a range of whole-school and cross-class activities. Having a small school where the students and staff all know each other is advantageous in achieving this.

The school has a correspondingly low level of vandalism and formation of exclusive cliques. School visits to a wide range of community facilities and venues from a young age set a high standard for behaviour towards other people and property.

The students have responded with enthusiasm to the school's commitment to making and donating products for the "Days for Girls" initiative for school girls in less privileged countries.

Students are also responsible for maintaining the amenity of their classroom and recreation areas, developing appreciation and acceptance of responsibility for their environment and facilities.

Guidelines are provided to promote respect and responsibility in the use of ICT and social networking sites by students.

12. Parent, student and teacher satisfaction

Parents : The school continues to enjoy frequent and open communication with parents and the teachers make themselves readily available to discuss student progress and well-being. The vast majority of feedback is positive, with parents appreciative of the school environment and the inspiration the teachers provide to the students. Where there have been parent concerns and suggestions, the school has addressed these, including the parents in the process as appropriate. Follow-up contact with parents continues until (as far as possible) the school has confirmed that matters have been dealt with to their satisfaction. In most cases parents have indicated their appreciation of the process and outcome.

New enrolments are largely a result of word of mouth recommendations, indicating a high level of support for the School within the parent body. Parents of leaving students are surveyed for reasons for leaving and the responses indicate that it is rarely due to dissatisfaction with the school.

Students : Teachers work to maintain the students' trust and respond to their needs, resulting in a co-operative and productive learning environment, where feedback is welcomed. Low levels of anti-social behaviour and high levels of

engagement in school activities are indicative of student satisfaction. Students entering from other schools regularly articulate appreciation for the welcoming and accepting environment and enjoyable learning activities.

Staff : Staff turnover is very low with a number of new staff joining on a casual or part-time basis, and the school has a strong record of class teachers staying with their class for the full primary or high school commitment. A safe and pleasant physical environment; a positive, supportive and collaborative professional environment where issues can be raised and addressed; access to a wide range of PD opportunities; and good relations with students, all contribute to a high level of teacher satisfaction.

In 2018 Steiner Education Australia plans to commission a nationwide survey of Steiner schools to accurately and independently ascertain levels of satisfaction and areas of concern for parents, Boards, students and staff with results for individual schools being made available to them, to inform where the school is doing well and areas for improvement.

13. Summary Financial information for the 2017 School Year

Income	%	Expenditure	
Fees & private income	30	Salaries & related expenses	67
State grants	14	Non-salary expenses	17
Commonwealth recurrent Grants	52	Capital Expenditure	16
Government Capital Grants	0		
Other Capital Income	4		