



Northern Tasmania Steiner Association 2024 Annual Report



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Introduction

The Tamar Valley Steiner School continued healthy growth in 2024. We welcomed many new families to our community and our identity as a school and a community has been enriched by new inspiration and enthusiasm for Steiner Education. Our full time enrolment numbers increased and our kindergarten was at capacity for the first time in the schools history. This is a significant achievement for the school, more families are now seeking Tamar Valley Steiner School as their school of first choice. Our parent and staff annual surveys demonstrate that we are continuing to provide quality learning, teaching and student support at our school with high levels of satisfaction in many areas of the operations of the school. Our students are happy and engaged learners with a strong sense of belonging. We are proud of the rich and meaningful curriculum we provide them every day and there is a strong sense of achievement amongst the staff as we guide our students to become whole human beings fostering diverse skills and talents.



With the completion of the early childhood building in 2023, 2024 marked the first year of the school running separate Kinder and Prep classes on the main school campus. The early childhood building was filled with the vibrancy of imaginative play; engaging crafts; and movement and songs through out the year.

In addition to this we established a collaborative

partnership with Adventure Patch to run a pre-school program alongside our kinder program. This initiative links directly to our strategic planning goals and was in response to seeing the need in families for us to provide Steiner education and care for those seeking childcare for their pre-school children. It provides an early learning program in readiness to attend our kinder in the year following. By making these improvements we increased the opportunities for Steiner education to be available to more families in the Launceston region.

Planning for the growth in our primary school facilities was a focus in 2024. We secured additional Australian Government funding for a new primary school classroom. The school has engaged an architect and has established



a project plan that will see the construction of purpose built classrooms in the primary school, along with the amphitheatre, a central outdoor learning and performance space begin in 2025.

2024 Achievements

Curriculum Development

In 2024 we focused on bringing more form and structure to our outdoor learning and bush school programs throughout the grades K - 6. Our outdoor learning scope and sequence document was developed, linking curriculum content and achievement standards from the Australian Steiner Curriculum with our schools own learning progressions for bush school and connection to country. It weaves in main lesson content from geology, botany, astronomy, history and geography with hard crafts and bush skill development. Bush School has always been an integral part of our schools identity and we continue to enrich the program with deeper learning and we considered excursions linking to each years stage in development.

Phase one of our whole school structured literacy curriculum was implemented. This involved curriculum development and planning a scope and sequence for the explicit teaching of literacy skills whilst maintaining the integrity of our Steiner pedagogy and daily learning rhythm. We further developed our literacy support and intervention programs with students receiving whole class instruction, small group intervention and 1:1 support, this is the multi-tiered system of support and is part of the mandated Tasmanian Governments Minimum Schooling Guarantee. The school invested in teacher training and classroom resources such as readers and learning materials to support this initiative.



In 2024 the school began a bold program of integrating Extra Lesson understandings and support for the healthy development of a child into our curriculum. Our class 1 and 2 children received developmental movement programs to assist in what seems to be a growing trend in children having challenges in integrating their movement and sensory systems. Through professional development and collegial collaboration with other Steiner Schools across Australia we are finding ways to help support the developmental delays that are occurring in young children across Australia which impact on their readiness for learning.

The school engaged in moderation with Tarremah in 2024, which involved the development, delivery and assessment of literacy and numeracy tasks focusing on achievement standards in the Australian Steiner Curriculum for grade 2 and grade 5. This process demonstrated that our students and teaching standards are at similar levels.

Professional Development of Teachers

Our school continues to offer enriching professional development both in Steiner pedagogy and understandings and in standard teacher improvement practices.

Steiner Professional Development Included:

- Liz Kees, experienced Steiner Teacher and Mentor
 - 3 day program of presentations and mentoring on Anthroposophical understandings underpinning the work of the class teacher.
- Joanne Owens, experienced Steiner Teacher and Mentor
 - Presentations and mentoring in speech and using voice, wet on wet painting and main lesson.
- Annette Barone, Educational Psychologist and Extra Lesson Practitioner and Trainer
 - Understanding cognitive assessments and the role they play in supporting children in a Steiner school
 - Extra lesson and developmental movement programs
- Dianne Tatum – Movement, Eurythmy, song and dance
- Michaela Moore – Eurythmy intensive in term 2 for each class, involving class teachers

Child Development and Wellbeing Education

The school hosted workshops from Steiner child development experts Kate Middleton and Melanie Deefholts for parents and staff. In addition a Wellbeing officer role was introduced to the school in 2024.

Staff and Community Wellbeing Initiatives

In 2024 we continued many initiatives to reduce unnecessary work for teaching staff, we timetabled changes to allow for required breaks each day and better supported release time for planning and administration tasks including students on learning support plans.

A comprehensive teacher wellbeing and psycho-social stress survey was conducted and analysed to gauge the level of stress in our teaching staff and pin point contributing factors to burn out in teachers.

From this we outlined a number of initiatives to further support the wellbeing of staff in schools and these were begun in 2024 and will continue into 2025.

Our school has focused on addressing the vulnerable space of parent-teacher relationships and implemented a Fostering Positive Relationships program in the school community to develop and maintain a circle of safety for all. This has involved educational material for both staff and parents in the new expectations around relationships and an update in key policies: Employee Code of Conduct; Parent Code of Conduct; Feedback and Concerns Policy and Conflict of Interest Policy.



Site Facilities, Governance and Community

In addition to the wonderful learning experiences the students have received, below is a summary of the schools highlights and successes.

- Completion of the Custom Built Playground for the Primary school
- Upper Primary redevelopment of the morning circle and outside spaces with purpose build garden beds. This included establishing disability access to the outside doors of the classrooms and administration entrance of the main building.
- Successfully held our first community Artisan and Makers market at the end of the year
- Relocation of the maintenance sheds and recycling laydown area to the back of the school and an upgrade to the entrance of the school.
- Enrolment number increase in the primary school and early childhood
- Stability in leadership with the Principal and Business Manager continuing in their roles.
- Employment and training of new Administration staff
- Successfully developed 12 month strategic goals and achieved 90% of targets
- Continued development of the whole school garden curriculum and establishment of garden beds for each class.



- Received a Plant Arc grant and held a community tree planting day to continue the rewilding and regeneration of native vegetation on our land.
- Successfully secured capital grant funding for an additional purpose-built Primary school classroom.

Tamar Valley Steiner School Summary

Tamar Valley Steiner School is an independent school registered in Tasmania to deliver a Steiner Education following the Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework (ASCF). At the time of census the school had 92 full time enrolled students, of which 4 identified as having Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background. This is a small percentage (2%) and is below the national average for independent schools. The school is located in St Leonards on the fringe of Launceston, and is considered an inner regional area. It services families who live in Launceston and the surrounding regional areas within 1 hr drive of the school.

Our school has a significant number of students coming from a Language background other than English at 17% of our full time enrolled students.

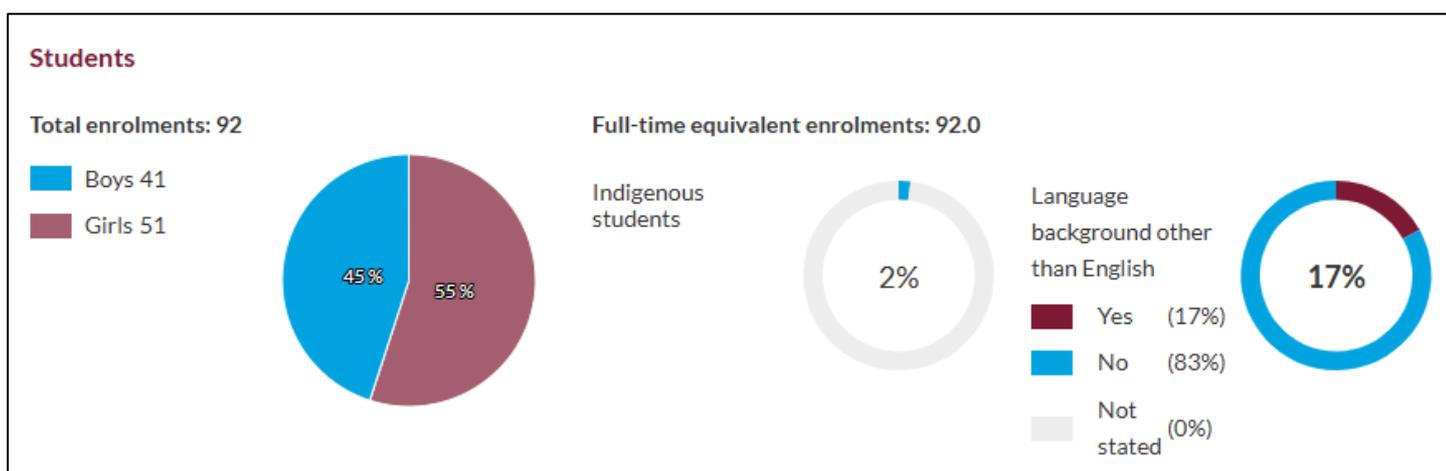


Figure 1: Background data of students enrolled at TVSS taken from the MySchool website for 2024

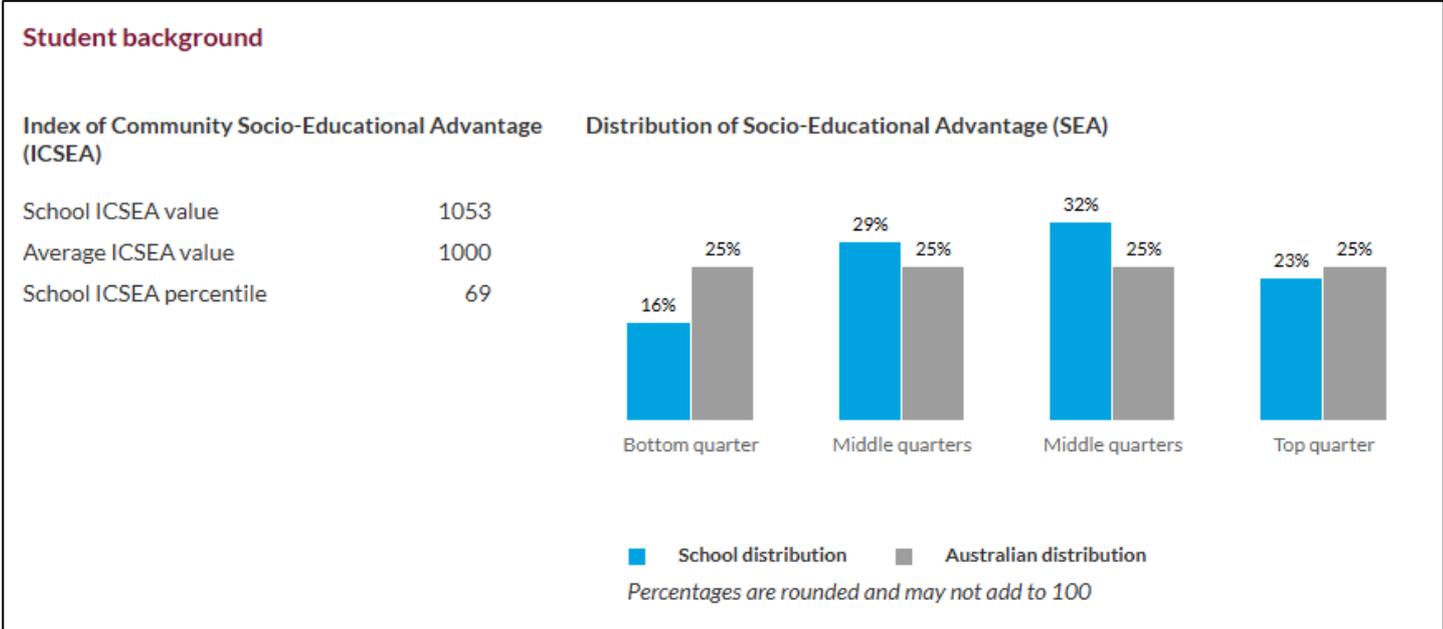


Figure 2: Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage data for TVSS families 2024, taken from the MySchool website

School facts	
School sector	Non-government
School type	Primary
Year range	Prep-6
Location	Inner Regional
<hr/>	
School staff	
Teaching staff	14
Full-time equivalent teaching staff	9.5
Non-teaching staff	15
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff	7.8

Figure 3: TVSS Summary Data for 2024 from MySchool Website

Student Attendance

Attendance Statistics for 2024

Our attendance statistics show that we averaged 87% attendance for the 2024 school year. This is an improvement on the 2023 attendance rates of 85% attendance. During 2024 we had a selection of students on part-time attendance agreements as part of their individual learning plans. Our goal is to reach 90% attendance, in semester 1 2024 we reached 89% attendance which is edging closer to the attendance rates we are hoping to achieve.

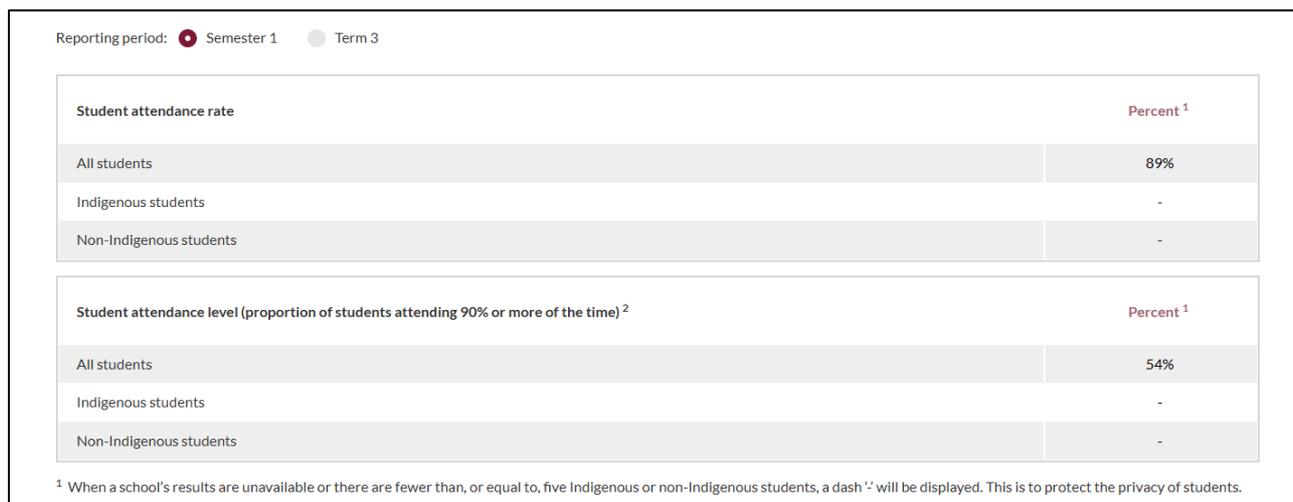


Figure 4 - Attendance Statistics for Semester 1 2024, sourced from the Myschool website.

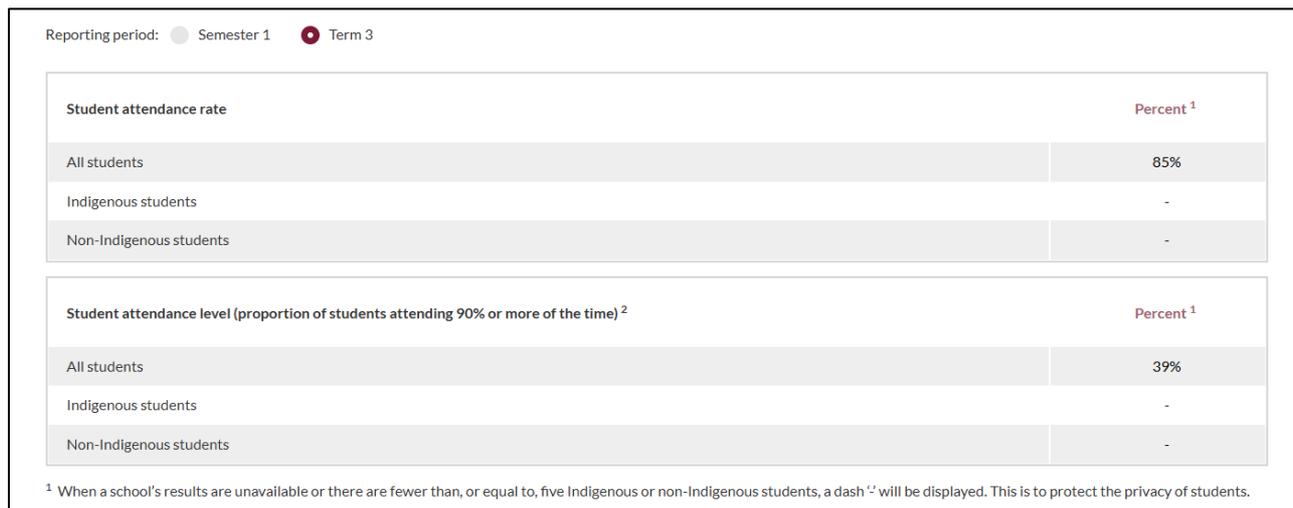


Figure 5 - Attendance Statistics for Term 3 2024, sourced from the Myschool website.

Our School Attendance Recording and Follow up Process

Attendance is recorded in the school's student management system, TASS. Parents must notify the school of any absences in writing (email or SMS) by 9:00 am on each day of absence. Teachers must complete attendance at 8.50am each day with all unexplained absences followed up by administration on the day of absence. Where absence from school is known in advance, parents must do a written notification to the administration and class teacher for absences of up to one week, or to the Principal for any absences of more than five weeks.

Attendance and ongoing absenteeism is monitored and followed up by the Administration team. The Principal will be notified if a child is absent without an adequate explanation, if this occurs multiple days in a row, and the teacher is not aware of the reason, the Principal will make a call to the parents to try to ascertain the explanation. If necessary, the Principal will invite the parent to a meeting with the teacher to discuss the absences and develop a plan to improve attendance to at least 80% unless a formal application for part-time attendance has been approved by the OER (Office of the Education Registrar). If there is no significant improvement in attendance, referral may be to a third party or specialist for intervention or OER or a Compulsory Conciliation Conference. In circumstances where it is determined that the child will have difficulty attending full-time due to additional needs, application for part-time attendance in the first instance may be made to the OER, as the School does not take part-time enrolments without approval.

Staffing Statistics and Qualifications

Tamar Valley Steiner School employed 14 teaching staff and 15 non-teaching staff during 2024 with a combination of full-time and part-time employment. This equated to the full-time equivalent of 9.5 teaching staff which is higher than 2023. The Principal is included in the teaching staff numbers. None of the 2024 staff identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Three of our staff come from non-english speaking backgrounds and are bilingual. The non-teaching staff employed - including administration, maintenance and learning assistants, was a total of 7.8 full-time equivalents.

Qualifications:

All teachers employed at Tamar Valley Steiner school are degree qualified. The school employed two new class teachers with full registration in 2024, bringing the total of teachers with full registration to seven. TVSS supported one teacher to attain proficient teaching standard and move from provisional to full registration during 2024.

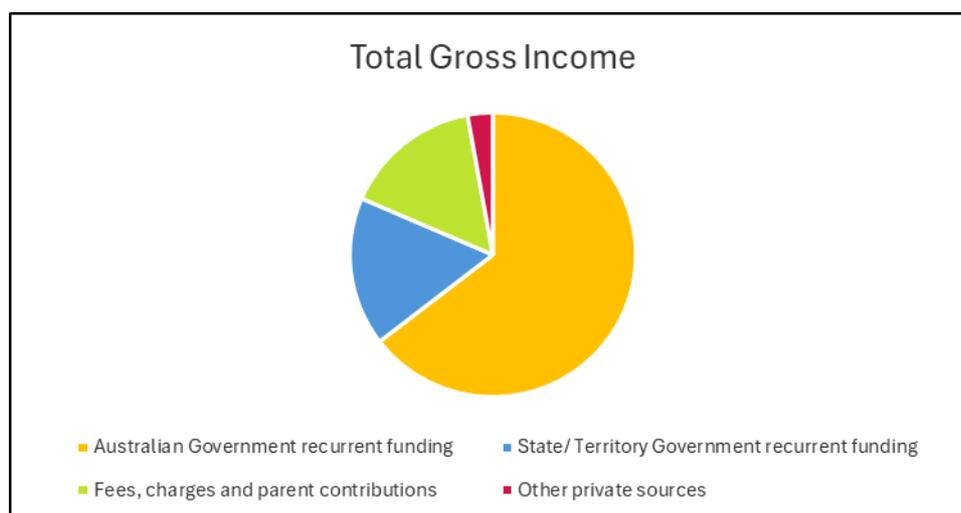


Financial Summary

The school is a low-fee paying private school and we receive funds from Federal and State governments along with contributions from parents as fees and charges.

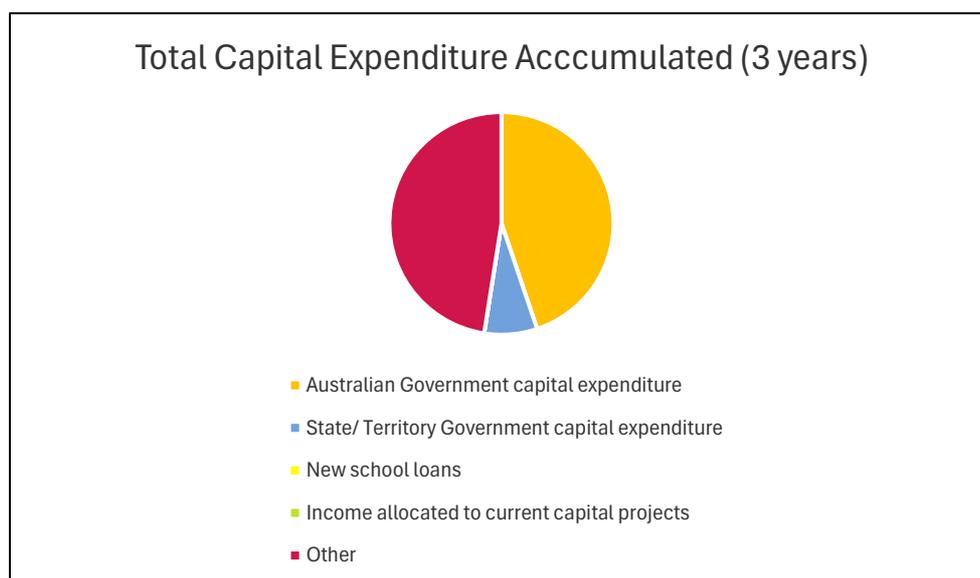
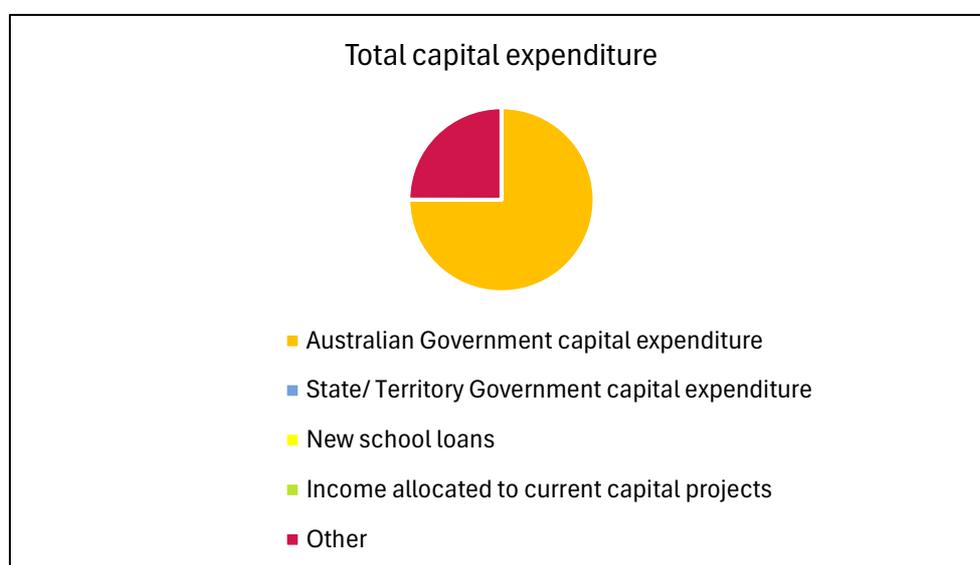
Full-time equivalent enrolments relating to recurrent income and capital expenditure			92
Net Recurrent Income 2024		Total	Per student
Australian Government recurrent funding		\$1,639,958	\$17,826
State/ Territory Government recurrent funding		\$429,891	\$4,673
Fees, charges and parent contributions		\$397,822	\$4,324
Other private sources		\$72,361	\$787
Total gross income (excluding income from government capital grants)		\$2,540,032	\$27,609
Deductions			
Income allocated to current capital projects		\$0	\$0
Income allocated to future capital projects and diocesan capital funds		\$0	\$0
Income allocated to capital debt servicing (including principal repayments and interest on loans)		\$191,232	\$2,079
Subtotal		\$191,232	\$2,079
Total net recurrent income		\$2,348,800	\$25,530

Figure 6: Funding allocations MySchool website data for 2024



Capital expenditure in 2024 was allocated to the finalization of the Stage 4 development project and the beginning of our Stage 5 and 6 development.

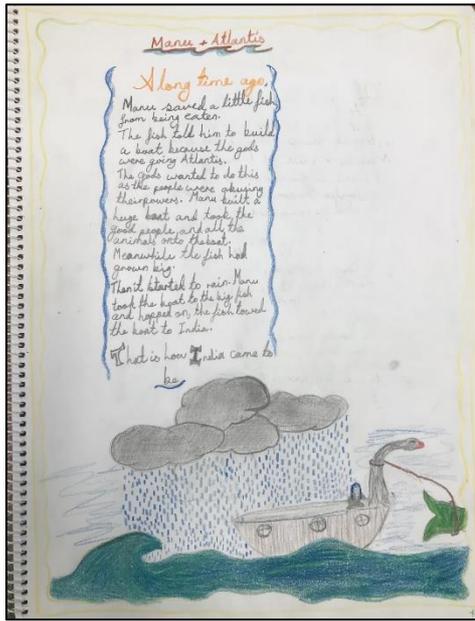
	Capital Expenditure	Total	\$ Accumulated
	Australian Government capital expenditure	\$312,547	\$990,892
	State/ Territory Government capital expenditure	\$0	\$168,692
	New school loans	\$0	\$0
	Income allocated to current capital projects	\$0	\$0
	Other	\$104,057	\$1,049,995
	Total capital expenditure	\$416,604	\$2,209,579



Figures 7 and 8: Capital Expenditure breakdown 2024; and accumulated capital expenditure taken from the MySchool website 2024.

Student Achievement

The Steiner Curriculum is a broad curriculum that values achievement in academia, the arts, and practical skills with equal importance. Class teachers are responsible for teaching main lessons, practice lessons, craft, bush school, and outdoor learning activities.



Specialist lessons

The strings program continued to flourish in 2024 with our upper primary students coming together each Friday afternoon for an ensemble group of cellos and violins.



Outdoor Learning – Gardening, Bush School, Camps and Excursions

At Tamar Valley Steiner school we pride ourselves in delivering meaningful experiential experiences to our children as part of their learning each year. Each week the children are participating in garden and outdoor learning experiences on campus. In addition to this they younger grades attend in weekly bush school at Trevallyn Reserve and we host a range of additional camps and excursions tailored to the curriculum and developmental stages of each age group.

- Our Kinder and Prep ventured to Punchbowl reserve to explore the local waterways and landscapes; Preps also had an excursion to Trowunna Wildlife park
- Class ones, twos and threes had full day bush school experiences at Trevallyn Reserve to deepen their connection to place and experience seasonal changes finishing with a beach bush school day at the end of they year;
- Class 3/4 participated in their first camp experience at the Hagley Farm School, and a separate day excursion to Elgaar organic farm
- Class fours ventured to Trowunna to support their animal study projects and had their first experience camping on school grounds in tents;
- Class fives participated in the 5/6 camp and a separate Botany excursion;
- Class sixes were led on a geology field trip as part of their 5/6 camp and finished the year with a team building and geography/mapping camp at Mt Cameron.



Academic Achievement

Student academic progress is measured through benchmark testing and through assessment against the Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework achievement standards. Academic merit awards presented to our class 6 alumni of 2023 in their new highschools.

Although Steiner Education is structured to consciously delay formal learning an additional year, Steiner students are able to attain average to above average results in NAPLAN assessments during primary school despite not being familiar with these styles of assessment. In 2024, 5 of the 10 enrolled students from Class 3 participated in NAPLAN; and 5 of the 8 Class 5 students participated. The average of each year level results for TVSS are tabulated below. As stated on the MySchool website, due to the fact that our NAPLAN student cohorts are below the minimum of 11 students, our results are not statistically viable to be used in comparison to national averages.

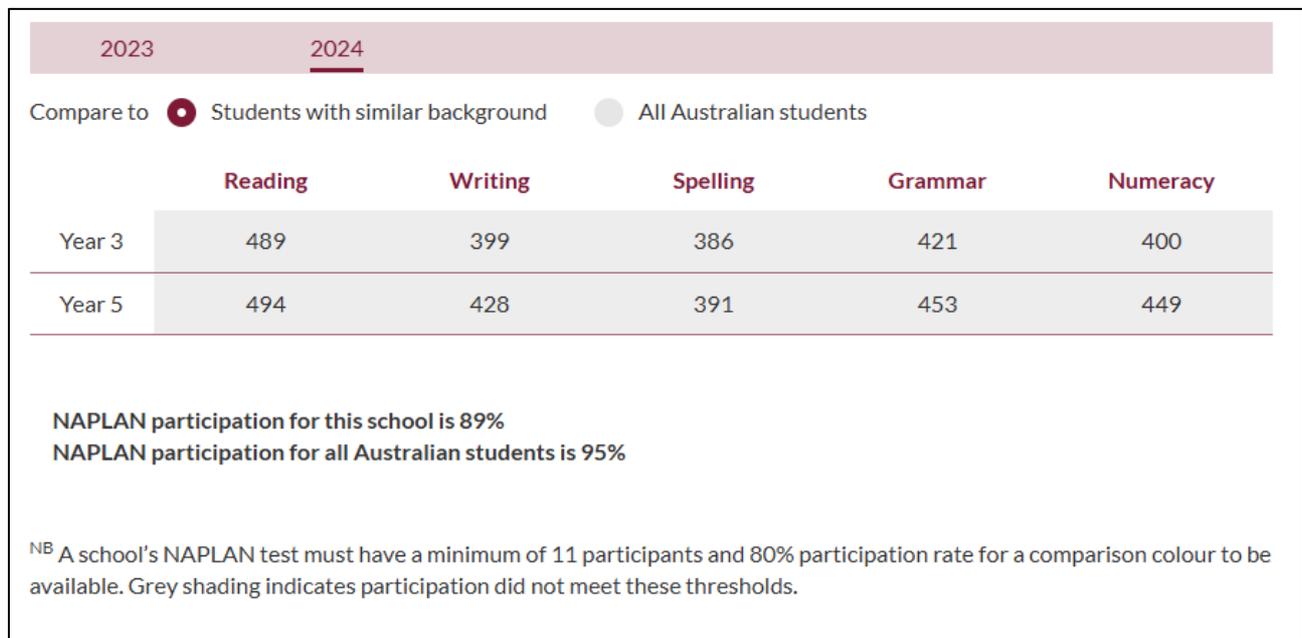
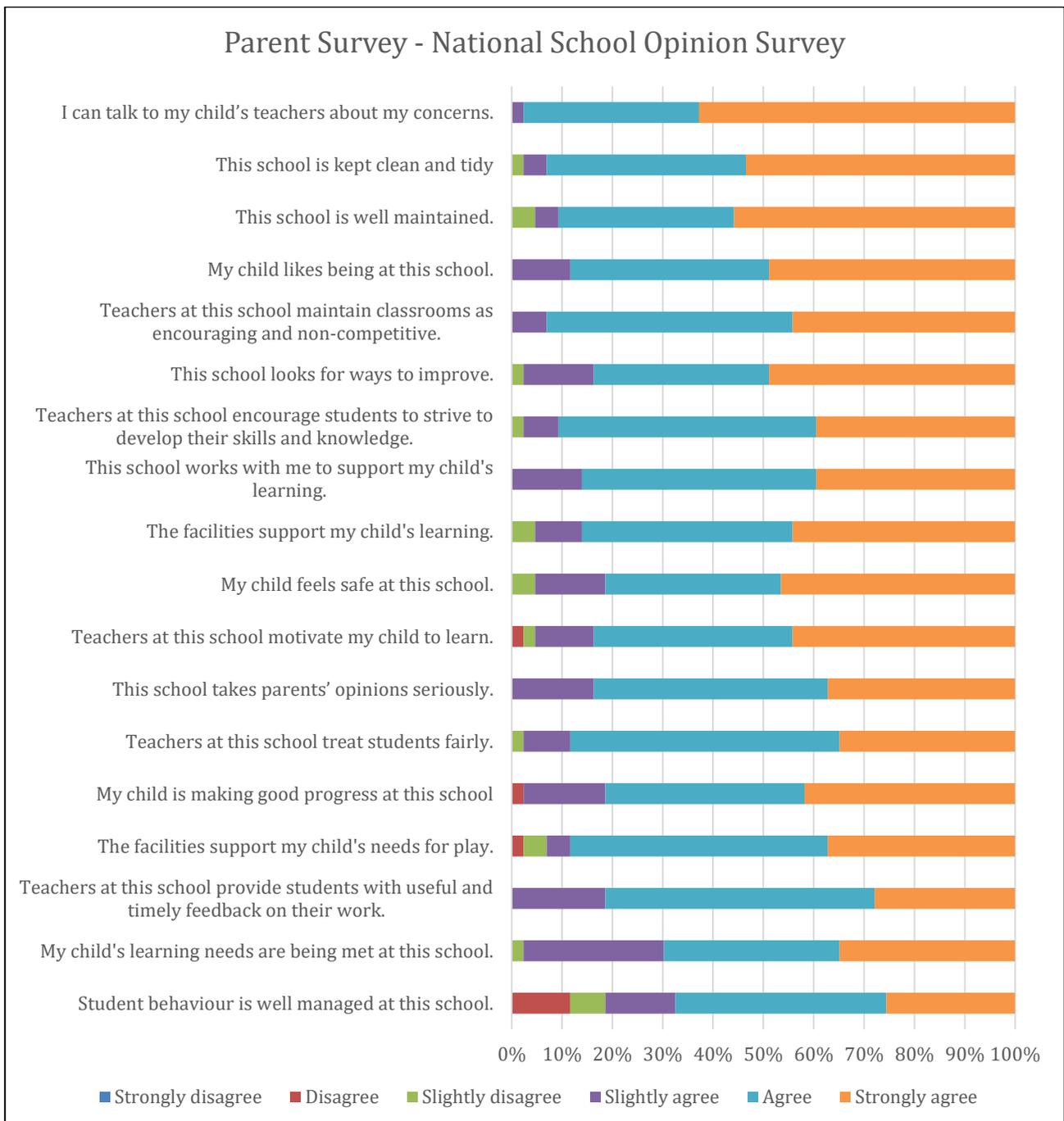
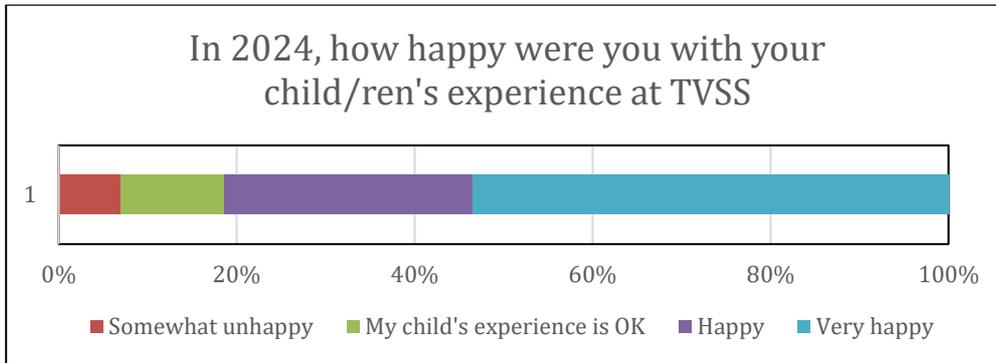


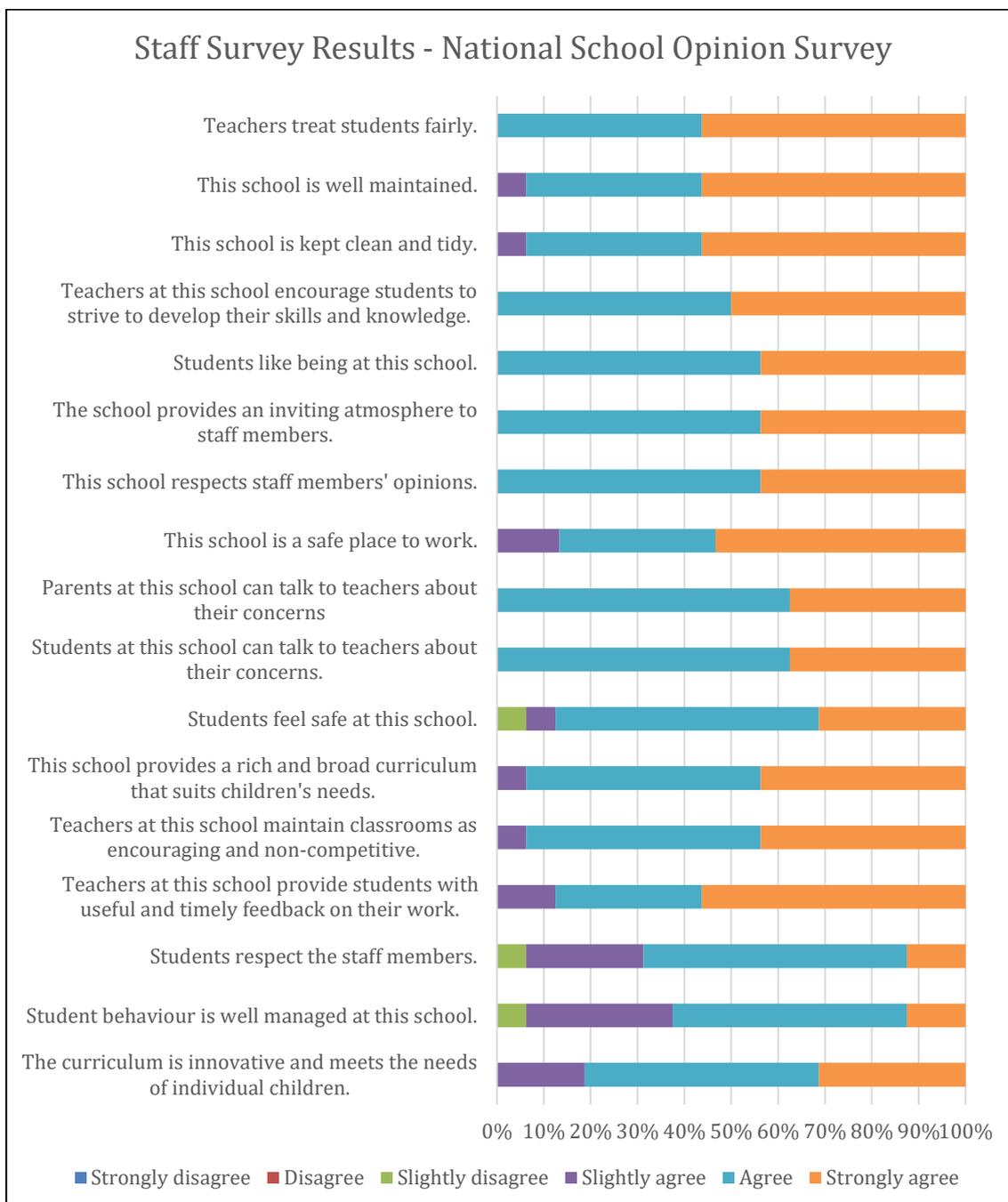
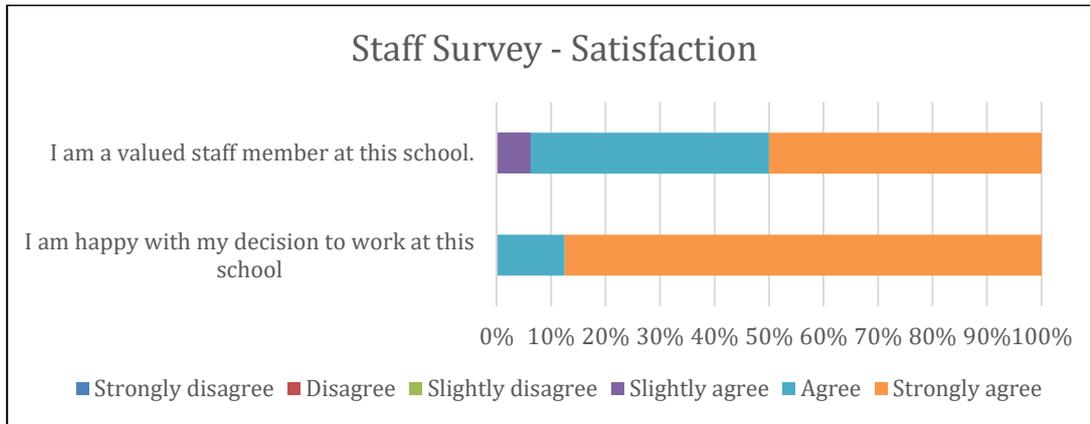
Figure 9: Tamar Valley Steiner School NAPLAN results 2024, from the MySchool website.

Parent and Staff Satisfaction – Survey Results

Parent Survey Results:



Staff Survey Results:



School Improvement Plan Outcomes

In early 2023 a new Strategic Plan was developed for the next five year period (2023- 2027). A summary of the strategic plan’s key focus areas for 2024, and the results of the 2024 School Improvement Plan are presented below.

Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 Overview

The Strategic Plan Goals are organised into five key focus areas:

- Growth and Development
- Quality Teaching and Learning
- Community Health and Wellbeing
- Environmental Stewardship
- Organisational Stability

Strategic Progress – Report on School Improvement Plan 2024

Focus Area: Growth and Development		
Goal 1: Be a hub for families from Early Years to High School		
Strategic Goals	Targets/Measures	Progress in 2024
1.1 High school commencing 2026	- Class 7 in 2026 - Class 8 in 2027	Reassessed - initial discussion and feasibility planning commenced. Based on upper primary student numbers the high school will not be feasible for 2026, but possible for year 7 in 2027. Focus on feasibility in 2025
1.2 Heart of the school warmly welcomes and builds community (central amphitheatre)	- Heart Amphitheatre built by 2026.	On track – Development of project scope and parameters, and selection of an architect has been achieved as part of Stage 5 capital works
1.3 School of first choice for our families	- > 85% of our families chose our school as their preferred school for their children.	Full Kinder 2024 class with a wait list Systems improvement with Kinder 2025 open days and early enrolment process was implemented with 100% of kinder 2025 families choosing Steiner education as a school of first choice.
1.4 Play spaces enrich curriculum and children’s development at all stages	- Play spaces and play elements for every age group that are mapped to developmental needs of each age group	Progress in 2024: Wooden construction materials were added to the junior and upper primary playground spaces. A purpose build separate play ground for class 1 students was built. The completion of the custom built playground was achieved.

1.5 Out of school hours care and early learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - OSHC offered by 2024. - Early learning offered by 2025 	Achieved: OSHC and a Preschool collaborative program were established in term 2 2024, and are successfully operating.
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Focus Area: Quality Teaching and Learning		
Goal 2: Inspired Steiner teaching engages and builds resilient and empathic learners		
Strategic Goals	Targets/Measures	Progress in 2024
2.1 Inspired Steiner Teachers who are well-supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each staff member has identified their strengths and is supported through the performance review process to grow their area of inspiration and strengthen its delivery in the curriculum. - Each staff member has a professional development plan with equitable funding. - Each teaching staff member has a long-term career plan that fits the school's needs. - All teaching staff are supported to gain proficient teaching registration 	<p>Achieved:</p> <p>Annual reviews of all staff were conducted and professional development goals outlined and funded in accordance with goals.</p> <p>One teacher was support to complete portfolio for AITSL proficient standard and full registration.</p> <p>Numerous professional development opportunities were funded by the school including start of the year Class Teacher Steiner Intensives, Literacy training days, in house professional development days.</p> <p>Extensive Staff Wellbeing Survey was developed, conducted and analysed outlining key focus areas of support in 2024.</p>
2.2 Align with the Core Principles of Australian Steiner Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All teachers to attend Intensive Training in 2024 	<p>Achieved:</p> <p>In house Anthroposophical professional development for staff facilitated by Liz Kees.</p> <p>College of teacher study groups focused on Adam Blannings teachings; Extra lesson and child development</p> <p>Professional Development at intensive training</p> <p>Principal attended SEA Student Support Conference</p>
2.3 Curriculum development guided by ASCF and Steiners Indications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continued Eurythmy Curriculum in 2024 - Moderation day with Tarremah to monitor Literacy and Numeracy curriculum and assessment - Meet the Minimum Schooling Guarantee set by the Tasmanian Government in a way that is aligned with Steiner pedagogy and child development - Draft Bush School and Outdoor Learning Curriculum K- 6 with links to the ASCF 	<p>Achieved:</p> <p>Whole School Literacy Program – pilot in Class 2; some implementation in Class 2 /3 and Classes 4 and 5/6.</p> <p>Bush School and Outdoor Learning Program Scope and Sequence developed linking ASCF content to our outdoor learning goals.</p> <p>Eurythmy program for students in term 2, 2024. Staff training and student eurythmy in October 2024.</p>

2.4 Improve Student Learning referencing ASCF outcomes and SEA National Assessment Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TVSS Assessment processes align with new SEA National Assessment Strategy in 2027 	<p>SEA National Assessment Strategy not focused on in 2024</p> <p>Review of student report template to align with the ASCF key learning areas</p>
2.5 Build students' capacity for engagement, cooperation, resilience, empathy, and respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction in frequency of behaviour incidents for individual students demonstrated in 2023 and proceeding years. - Documented and clear behaviour management system established. 	<p>On track:</p> <p>Further development of the student behaviour management process to include student risk assessment documents; behaviour plans; understanding the root cause of challenging behaviours and professional development in Collaborative Proactive Solutions and functional behavioural analysis.</p> <p>Restorative Practice Facilitator training of a staff member and the initial delivery of restorative practice skills with staff</p> <p>Research and training in neurodiversity, minimizing triggers for dysregulation and supporting executive functioning challenges in children</p> <p>Implementation of developmental movement programs in Class 1 and 2 to increase students capacity to be ready to learn.</p>

Focus Area: Community Growth and Wellbeing		
Goal 3: Nurture Connections for a Culture of Belonging		
Strategic Goals	Targets/Outcomes	Progress in 2024
3.2 Community Projects aligned with School development needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of projects with community input and participation such as a community garden - Increased community capacity to lead and work with school on community projects 	National Tree Day – rewilding and tree planting project held in August and September.
3.3 Community Engagement plan drives development of school as a hub for families	- Evidence that community engagement contributes to the goal of the school as a hub for families	The first community Artisan market was held with a great turn out and talented children and families hosting stalls
3.4 Adopt New Child Safe National Principles	- Schedule of Reviewing of Child Safe Policies is within the Annual School Calendar under Administration Compliance requirements	On track: Board and staff have completed some child safe modules on the National Child Safe Framework

Focus Area: Environmental Stewardship		
Goal 4: Environmental Harmony		
Strategic Goals	Targets/Outcomes	Progress in 2024
4.1 Site planning and development creates harmony with the seasons	- Capital development incorporates local landscape and seasons into the design	New Whole School garden redesigned around the custom play space Initial discussion with architects regarding the integration of the primary school into the landscape
4.2 Regenerate our land; grow food and create a sustainable future.	- School garden established and providing surplus produce for students/community.	On track: School gardens for each classroom were further developed and established in 2024.
4.3 Reduce our Environmental Impact	- Multiple initiatives undertaken to reduce environmental impact including reduction in energy use, cleaner energy, water use, pollution, and waste.	Not a focus in 2024
4.4 Foster relationships with and support local Aboriginal Tasmanians	- Connections with local Aboriginal Tasmanians established. - Initiatives for supporting local Aboriginal Tasmanians have been documented and implementation commenced. - Reconciliation Action Plan developed and implementation commenced	Focus for 2025

Focus Area: Organisational Stability		
Goal 5: Stable and healthy staff, leadership and governance		
Strategic Goals	Targets/Outcomes	2023 Progress and Comments
5.1 Succession plan for Leadership and Board.	- Succession plan in place for key positions (Principal, Business Manager, other leadership positions, Chair of the Board, Secretary of the Board) - Functional Board recruitment strategy	Implementation of a College Executive rotation for all College of Teacher members to develop leadership skills. Successful recruitment of a new board members and a new board Chair and Secretary.
5.2 Quality teaching staff secured	- Performance review process linked to professional development and strategic goals of staff retention. - Strategic long term career planning for key teaching staff	On Track: New Annual Review documents link professional development goals and link 5 year career goals with long term strategic intentions of the school.
5.3 Development plan matches goals.	- Well-documented long-term and costed capital development plan. - Sound long-term financial planning that clearly supports capital development goals while ensuring operational targets are met. - Clear use of industry metrics (via Somerset Education) to manage financial stability	On track: ISBGAT grant for a larger primary school class was secured during 2024.

	and sustainable development as a fundamental priority	
5.4 Marketing to secure supportive families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong long term marketing plan linked to strategic goals. 	<p>On track: Marketing focussed on re-branding the school; the development of a suite of photos; a marketing plan focussing on Kinder enrolments and the development of a new website currently in draft for editing.</p> <p>Successful Kinder 2025 Open Days and marketing program resulting in 21 enrolments.</p>
5.5 Staff wellbeing is managed with sustainable workloads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff surveys show high levels of satisfaction. - Staff surveys show high levels of wellbeing. - Staff culture of managing work-life balance and not working any more than reasonable additional hours - Staff wellbeing policy and strategy developed and implemented 	<p>2024 Progress: a shift to reducing stressors and workload associated with parent communications over issues.</p> <p>Staff Wellbeing Survey was conducted</p> <p>Group Norms were established for College Executive and Faculty meetings</p> <p>Fostering Positive Relationships initiative was implemented including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updating the Parent Code of Conduct Updating the Staff Code of Conduct Implementing a new Conflict of Interest Policy <p>An induction video was developed on fostering positive relationships in the school</p>