

# BALLARAT STEINER KINDERGARTEN AND SCHOOL

## *Annual Report 2022*



*“Receive the children in reverence, educate them in love,*

This is our school.  
Let peace be found here.  
May the rooms, be full of happiness.  
Let love abide, love for one another.  
The love of life itself.

Everybody knows that many hands are needed.  
If you want to build a house.  
But to build a good school, there is a very  
simple rule:  
What you need is not hands but hearts.

*“Our highest endeavour must be to develop free human beings who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives.” Rudolf Steiner*

# Acknowledgement of Country

Ballarat Steiner School and Kindergarten acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the Traditional Owners of the vast and beautiful land and its seas across Australia and have been its caretakers for over fifty thousand years. We acknowledge the impact of colonisation and the need to heal the trauma this inflicted on lives, cultures, families and rights to live on Traditional Land. We are committed to deepening our knowledge of Aboriginal culture and ensuring the cultural safety of Aboriginal children. We recognise the diversity within and across Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and commit to considering this in all our interactions.

Following the National Indigenous Australians Agency vision for reconciliation, we want to work together to improve the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; and embed their living cultures, stories and histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples into our culture and celebrate all Australians as part of our national story.

We, at Ballarat Steiner School & Kindergarten, would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we are located, the Waddawurrung people of the Kulin Nation, and pay our respects to their elders' past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In the spirit of reconciliation, we respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners of County throughout Victoria and pay respect to the ongoing living cultures of First Peoples. We recognise the strengths and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures in the face of intergenerational injustices and impacts.

*Kim barne barre Wadda Wurung (this is the land of the Waddawurrung)*

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## *Our Essential Purpose*

We are committed to the development of an educational journey, based on the principles of Rudolf Steiner, which will further the growth and nourishment of students and our entire community.

### *To educate our students to:*

- Nurture and encourage a strong sense of self and responsibility towards the world.
- Be the best that they can be and do what they need to in order to meet the challenges of the future.

### *To provide:*

- A social, academic, emotional and physical education for the children.
- A well-rounded holistic education for the children – our basis for this is the picture of development given to us by Rudolf Steiner and elaborated in Steiner schools around the world since his time.
- A life-long love of, and a capacity for, learning.

### *Our purpose is to:*

- Provide education to the whole child.
- Support the development of strong, individual, imaginative, creative and socially responsible children and adults.
- Nurture families and community.
- Create a child safe environment.
- Give the children the foundation to realise and strive towards their destiny.

## Our Values

Values are the core of our school's being. They tell the "how" of what we do, and underpin our policies, processes, and vision for the future. Our values also determine how we interact with each other, the broader community and our environment.

*We value an education that is:*

### *Developmental*

We value the developmental picture of human consciousness given as a basis for this education by Rudolf Steiner. We believe children need to play, to be part of nature, and to enjoy a time free from the early commercialisation of childhood. We understand that a healthy childhood provides the foundation for ongoing wellbeing in later life.

### *Balanced*

We value this uniquely balanced education which integrates academic excellence with practical learning and creative and performing arts. This nurtures the development of clear thinking and sensitivity in feeling, and the ability to carry these thoughts and feelings into action.

### *Safe*

We value child safety and have zero tolerance for child abuse.

### *Diverse*

We value the unique spiritual nature of every child, recognising that each child is on an individual journey of biographical development. We appreciate the diversity of beliefs and experiences that each individual brings to our community and encourage collaboration over competition as the basis for both individual achievement and community harmony.

### *Creative*

We value a shared creative journey in learning that brings together child, family and teacher. We value curiosity, imagination, beauty, wonder and strive to protect these qualities as part of a lifelong love of learning.

### *Sustainable*

Steiner education develops skills, knowledge and values that promote behaviour in support of a sustainable environment. We acknowledge humanity's interdependence with the future of the natural world. We aim to work in harmony with the forces of nature in a creative and collaborative manner, continuing the traditions of Rudolf Steiner's sustainable agricultural traditions (biodynamics), and working to foster respect for self, others and the environment.

## *Overview and Context*



Steiner education is designed to be a health-giving education that nurtures and balances the human faculties of thinking, feeling and willing. The prime purpose of Steiner Education is to support and educate children so that their own innate and unique human qualities may come to greater fulfilment. We work with the philosophy elaborated by Rudolf Steiner (1861 - 1925) which describes the child as a spiritual being who brings their own gifts into the world. It is the task of the teacher to recognise and foster these gifts and to support the child in becoming their true self. Steiner education strives to provide an environment - physical, emotional and intellectual - where not only the thinking, but also the willing (striving towards a purposeful destiny) and the feelings of the child can grow and truly reflect the whole person. Rudolf Steiner awakened a new impulse in education with this philosophy.

One of the fundamental tasks of a Steiner teacher is to truly know the children in their care. It is this deep intention to understand each child that drives teachers to find the gesture, experience and/or works that will truly meet the students' needs. This emphasis on the development of the whole human being and unfolding the potential that

lies within each child is what distinguishes our education from other approaches.

Ballarat Steiner School is one of over 50 Steiner schools throughout Australia and one of over 1100 schools located across the globe. Waldorf/Steiner education forms the largest and fastest growing non-denominational educational movement in the world.

*“Confidence is one of the golden words that must govern social life in the future.  
The other golden word is love, love of that which we have to do.  
And in the future, good deeds will be done out of love for humanity.”  
Rudolf Steiner*

Ballarat Steiner School is located on a picturesque 10-acre site on the corner of Moss Avenue and Midland Highway, Mount Helen. We offer playgroup, kindergarten and primary schooling. Our kindergarten and playgroup offer a beautiful nurturing and natural environment for children to explore and develop their individuality. Our playgroup sessions, with parents, take place on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings of the school term from 9.30 to 11.30am. Using natural and simple toys and gentle activities such as bread kneading, singing, stories and a shared morning tea, a calm and nurturing environment is created. The rhythm of both active and quiet play is carefully planned to create a safe and joyous environment that is both enriching and nourishing. The routine follows through to the kindergarten which supports and ensures a smooth transition for the children.

The kindergarten is play based, providing a nurturing environment during early childhood. A sound rhythm and routine and natural open-ended play supports the development of a strong imagination. Scientific studies have confirmed Steiner’s philosophy that the development of the child’s imagination allows for greater success in adult life.

*“Young children’s play allows them to explore, identify, negotiate, take risks and create meaning. Children who engage in quality play experiences are more likely to have well-developed memory skills, language development, and are able to regulate their behaviour, leading to enhanced school adjustment and academic learning” (Bodrova & Leong, 2005).*

The routine and rhythm philosophy continues throughout the Primary School’s integrated academic curriculum with a strong intention to deliver a high quality and rich educational experience for all students. The school provides a hands-on artistic approach to the teaching of literacy, numeracy and natural science. Students are also engaged in an imaginative and creative program that includes painting, drawing, craft, modelling, Eurythmy, cooking, woodwork and gardening. Music is taught and played throughout the school and is an integral part of the daily classroom activities. A strings program is introduced in class three with all students learning either violin or cello. Indonesian is introduced in class one and is taught across the school to class six. Our school strives for excellence in all areas of our curriculum and equips students with all of the necessary skills to move confidently into Secondary School.

Ballarat Steiner School and Kindergarten holds regular open days throughout the year. These occasions are an opportunity for enquiring parents to discuss the school and kindergarten’s ethos and teaching practices. We hold an annual Autumn fair and open day during which all aspects of the school are open for the public and community to experience. We also hold an annual information night at the school in October and an ‘Experience our Kindergarten’ session in July. These events showcase the classes specifically and involve lengthy question and answer sessions with the teachers. At the information night, alumni attend to answer questions regarding their educational journey and experiences. We also facilitate termly tours of our school in action. This opportunities to showcase our kindergarten and school we curb substantially during the Victorian lockdowns so in 2022 we eased back gently with an open morning in May and smaller open mornings for both prep and the kindergarten.

**Waldorf (Steiner) education** pedagogy distinguishes three broad stages in child development, each lasting approximately seven years. The early year’s education focuses on providing practical, hands-on activities and environments that encourage creative play. In the elementary school, the emphasis is on developing pupils’ artistic expression and social capacities, fostering both creative and analytical modes of understanding. Secondary education focuses on developing critical understanding and fostering idealism. Throughout, the approach stresses the role of the imagination in learning and places a strong value on integrating academic, practical and artistic pursuits.

*“Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited.  
Imagination encircles the world.” Albert Einstein*

## *From the Chairperson*

It's with great pleasure that I table the chairman's report, as I enjoy my seventh year on the committee.

The school operates with a college of teachers, determining the educational pathways, and the school committee, charged with assisting the college and attending to legal, strategic, financial and corporate governance matters.

This report covers the 2022 calendar year, which saw the school regain some normality after extremely challenging and disruptions in the 2021 and 2020 years.

From a personal level my connections with the school include Ruby in year 4 and Jackson who departed the school at the end of 2022.

It is only with retrospect that one fully understands the impact of the education of Ballarat Steiner School, on their child, and I must say that Jackson has taken to St. Patrick's like a fish to water. His grades are outstanding, and he has been asked on multiple occasions what primary school he attended. There has been no lag's with the introduction of technology, and he has displayed the quest for learning established in his six years of Steiner Education. Yes, he was anxious leading up to his first day, and those anxieties faded instantly as his education journey continued seamlessly. Kim and I personally have so much to thank the school for.

The school has delivered a series of camps and activities, that recommenced in earnest in the second half of 2021, to recapture the interactions lost by the previous covid interruptions. I believe this has been very successful.

You may have noticed some improvements around the school and while always maintained to a terrific standard, I have particularly enjoyed the removal of corrugations from the drop and go loop.

Volunteering for a committee is a significant commitment. I would like to thank Claire Davenport (who continued supporting the Committee after her child relocated), John Globe (retired) and Ellen Sabo who all made valuable contributions through the year. I was also delighted to welcome Donna Pond to the committee and thank Hannah Connell (Vice Chair), Louise Cheslett and Svantje Mertens that make up the Committee.

I would like to thank on behalf of the school community all the teachers of the 2022 calendar year. I believe we have a wonderful cohort of teachers that always place the personal growth of our children first.

As flagged in last year's address, the State and Federal Government funding of schools has allowed the school to replenish its balance sheet, so that it can be robust and undertake initiatives for the benefit of our students and future students. The school's growth is in our hands and the focus to grow the school has seen the addition of a marketing resource, and I am very pleased to announce that the school has made an appointment of a Head of School to commence latter this year.

Effective of this meeting my role on the committee has come to an end, I would like to call on everyone at this meeting to consider volunteering to be part of this, or future committees, and formally assist in decision making for the benefit of the school.

To a remarkable 2023 and beyond.

Tony

## Staffing



We currently have six full-time teachers who teach kindergarten, prep, class one, class two, class three, class four and class five and six as a composite class. With the resignation of Jane Evans, Ambika Bone, as a dual qualified early childhood teacher and primary teacher resumed her role as the kindergarten teacher. This created an opening for Cathy Arnott, a parent and teacher to step into the prep teaching position.

Bess Burgess also joined the school as the Class one teacher, with Donna Pond continuing with her class to class two, Lisa Peters-Roose continued with her class to class three, Svantje Mertens continued with her class, class four and John Goble continued

with his class five and class six as a composite class. We also have great support for the teachers with the teaching of specialist areas in our curriculum, although we did lose some teachers through the Covid Mandates. In 2022, Miriam Kriss and Yvonne Holley taught the string instrumental lessons and Johanna Schiebel and Elisabeth May support our teachers with soft craft. Amanda Hotchin teaches classes three, four, five and six in hard crafts, while also taking class two during the class teacher's release time. In addition to this, we also have a teacher for educational support for three days per week, a part-time student learning support aide and class assistants in both prep and the kindergarten. Continuous learning for both the teachers and the children is paramount in the ethos of our school and is reflected within our policies. Of our primary level class teachers, five are female and one is male. All of our class teachers have VIT registration, with two on provisional registration. Through the loss of our Head of School during 2021, the school appointed Julianne Iddles to be the community Liaison for a one year contract.

Our Business Manager, Louise Cheslett, and valuable administrative staff, Denise Williams, Anna Placidi and Teegan Tolliday provide support and general assistance to our teachers. Lisa Moore remains our part time gardener and Bernd Golombiewski remains our part time cleaner and maintenance person.



Most of our teachers have current certificates in First Aid, CPR as well as Asthma and Anaphylaxis Management. With the introduction of the child safe standards, all staff and governance committee members must undertake an E-module regarding protecting children and reporting child abuse and sign the school's Code of Conduct.

Professional development (PD) opportunities build upon the foundation established by basic teacher qualifications. At Ballarat Steiner School provision has been made for funding support and replacement teachers to enable staff to attend PD workshops and courses. The expenditure for externally provided professional development paid for by the school in 2022 was \$10,690 which does not include replacement staff. This is quite low in comparison to previous years due to the Covid-19 restrictions. Staff were involved in activities such as further study, Steiner Teacher training (held here at the school, Melbourne and/or Sydney), lectures, seminars, ISV special briefings, conferences and in school curriculum days and training (e.g., First Aid and college mentor opportunities).

Four of our teachers are provisionally registered, while the rest have full registration. We have no teachers who identify as Indigenous.

## *Child Safe Standards*

The dignity of the human person is fundamental to Steiner teaching. The development of a child is dependent on the quality of care provided by the significant adults in their lives. The children's safety, a basic human right, is a pre-requisite for the kindergarten and school to be able to carry out its mission to educate.

As an educational institution, we have a legal and moral responsibility to respond to incidents involving abuse and neglect of the children with whom we have contact, and to report instances that we believe involve physical abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. We must act to protect children from abuse and build an environment where children feel respected, valued, encouraged and empowered to reach their full potential.

Students and adults in our school and kindergarten know what to do if they observe or are subject to abuse or inappropriate behaviour. This includes complying with all legal requirements of reporting child abuse to police and child protection organisations. We have zero tolerance for child abuse, and when a staff member forms a reasonable belief that a child has been harmed or is at risk

of being harmed, they will take action that is timely, respectful and coordinated. Our staff have a consistent set of procedures to follow when making a notification of suspected abuse. All allegations and safety concerns will be treated seriously and consistently in accordance with our policies and procedures.

Our school and kindergarten are committed to preventing child abuse and proactively identifies, reduces and removes risks. Child Safety legislation and practices are regularly discussed and reviewed to support our culture of prioritising the safety of children in our care. Our school and kindergarten is committed to the training and education of our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks. In addition to this, we are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability. We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that guide our Committee of Management, College of Teachers, management team, staff and volunteers in achieving our commitment to creating a culture of respect, dignity, equality and fairness to all who are part of our school community. We also reinforce the message that the protection of children is a responsibility for everyone.

**If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.**

## *Our Curriculum - A Creative Education*

One of the most notable ways in which a Steiner school approach to education is different is the acknowledgement of the different phases of child development and its influence on the curriculum. Primary years at the Ballarat Steiner School focus on delivering a high quality and rich educational experience to children. We provide a hands-on artistic approach in the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Children are also engaged in an experiential and imaginative program that includes modelling, painting, cooking, craft, music, woodwork, gardening and drawing. Imagination is needed for creative work in adult life. Children nourished with imagination and opportunity for artistic expression will have the capacities needed to meet the technological and social challenges of their time. Historically the human being drew pictures before reading and before the use of abstract symbols. Speech is a crucial element and precedes writing as a foundation to reading. In our foundation years speech and language are developed extensively through many mediums. From the beginning in playgroup, where they learn short poems and rhymes and listen to short stories, through to kindergarten and prep where they experience longer and more complicated rhymes and stories. All this work builds the foundations necessary for literacy development. By the





time the children are in class one they are ready to explore the world of reading and writing. All these aspects of Steiner education - form drawing, hand work, a foreign language, Eurythmy and so forth - all help to foster the children's development in reading and writing. The children learn the letter forms through stories and pictures given to them by their teacher. In the curriculum, writing precedes reading and is developed out of the creative experience of drawing and/or painting letters. The children write words and read their own writing before working with printed literature. Throughout the Primary School classes our aim is to share the finest literature and narratives with the students, appropriate to their age. Our reading approach, which includes daily individual reading, is full of imagery, content and the richness of language, which develops an appreciation of literature in the students.

The children's imaginative life and grasp of language is nourished by the hearing, retelling, acting and illustrating of stories. For the 6-7 year olds, the teacher draws inspiration from fairy tales. For the 7-8 years old it is from fables and legends. Old Testament stories are used for the 8-9 year olds. Norse stories and legends are used for the 9-10 year olds. Greek myths and India at 10-11 years of age and the Roman Empire at ages 11-12. In using a sequence of this kind through different qualities of imaginative experience, the teacher prepares the way for a clear representation of the history of humankind. The curriculum is designed to harmonise with the particular stage of development that the child has reached, while affording a rich context in which to work on practical and academic skills. In this way the development of the feeling life is nurtured from practical learning and the curriculum. This type of education is both integrative and child centred.



### *Specialist Subjects*

Specialist subjects contribute, support and enrich our curriculum whilst providing a balanced, diverse and engaging education for the whole child.

#### *Craft*



Craft is used to complement and enhance the academic aspects of class work. Handwork harmonises and balances the intellectual work undertaken by children, developing qualities such as perseverance, determination, concentration, motor skills and encourages care and respect for the handwork process. Through craft activities the children are given confidence to make things that are practical for themselves and for others, and in doing so a sense of accomplishment is achieved. Students from prep undertake a soft craft session and this continues throughout the school. From class three onwards, students also have an hour-long session with our specialist hard craft teacher.

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The Creative Arts are incorporated in various key learning areas of our curriculum. Examples of this includes wet-on-wet painting, form drawing, beeswax and clay modelling.

## Music

Music is a strong and important part of our curriculum, bringing expression and balance to the student's day. The music program incorporates recorder playing, choir, ensemble and specialist instrumental lessons. In class three, each student commences violin or cello lessons in preparation to joining our String Ensemble in class four. All students in class three and above form the school choir. The choir participates and performs at various community events including at residential homes and school festivals.

## Sports and Games

Sports and games are planned to correspond with the child's developmental needs and the children experience these activities every day. Sports and games develop children as co-operative individuals, rather than forcing children into one-sided competitive positions. Each year, the students from class two onwards participate in swimming lessons at the Ballarat Aquatic Centre. The class five students meet with other regional Steiner schools each year, where they compete in a Greek style Olympics that coincides with the class five academic curriculum and the study of Ancient Greece.

## Performing Arts

Recitation and drama are also an integral part of our school life from kindergarten all the way through the school. As a consequence of this, the children develop confidence and the capacity to perform in front of others. Throughout the school year, performances take place in front of class groups, class parents and as they get older in front of the whole school. Each term ending is highlighted with various performances during our seasonal festivals. This culminates when the whole school perform the Shepherd's play at our end-of-year Christmas festival.

## Festivals and Community Gatherings



Our school celebrates seasonal festivals at the end of each term with a Christmas play at the end of the year. The annual cycle of our festivals compliments our daily and weekly rhythms and provides an opportunity for our whole school community to come together to participate, share and be as one. The festivals are a highlight of each year.

Our Harvest Festival was cancelled due to term one ending earlier than scheduled and our Winter and Spring Festivals were children only events that parents could not attend. At the winter solstice, a spiral was walked by each class in the darkness accompanied by singing and recorder. Spring is a festival of flowers and joyful sharing with a maypole (weather permitting) and vintage games. The Christmas festival culminates in all the students from class one through to class six performing our own version of Steiner's Shepherd's play.

Social events which may or may not be fundraisers and regular working bees are also held. While being important events for the functioning of our school, they are also a lot of fun and strengthen our sense of belonging and community.

## Outdoor Education - Excursions and Camps

Camps and excursions are an important part of the child's social development and are often integrated with the curriculum and Main Lesson work. There is no extra fee for these curriculum aspects as they are considered part of our integrated learning program. Our students go on several different camps in their time at our school and in 2022 we took up the government sponsored Positive Start



Camps with class two to six heading to Anglesea for our first multi class camp. Class 5 6 also went to Mount Arapiles to take part in some abseiling and rock climbing activities while camping and bushwalking.



Class 2 – 6 also took part in the annual swimming lessons in term one. Other camps that took place included the Halls Gap camp for classes four, five and six, the class 4 / 5 trip to the Otway Fly and Treetops Adventures, as well and a visit to the Cape Otway Light station. Class six had an experience at the Ragged School at Sovereign Hill which involves load of fun and laughter as all dress up to create the mood. The class 3s and the class 6 groups had sleepovers here at school. Students normally would go on excursions to Melbourne to visit the Museum, Science works, Melbourne Zoo, Captain Cooks Cottage, various religious buildings and the Melbourne Art Gallery. They also go on local trips to the Ballarat Wildlife Park and Ballarat Art Gallery.



*“The need for imagination, a sense of truth and a feeling of responsibility: these are the three forces which are the very nerve of education.” Rudolf Steiner*

## *Financial Information*

### *Expenses:*

In 2022, wages accounted for 69% of our total expenditure. This is lower than the 75% industry normal. This is due to the Head of School resigning and the other wages expenses lost due to Covid Mandates.

Our expenses indicate sensible spending patterns and the commitment to socially responsible spending. The finance and administration team continue to improve and develop administration procedures and management practices, offering support in first aid and teacher assistance.

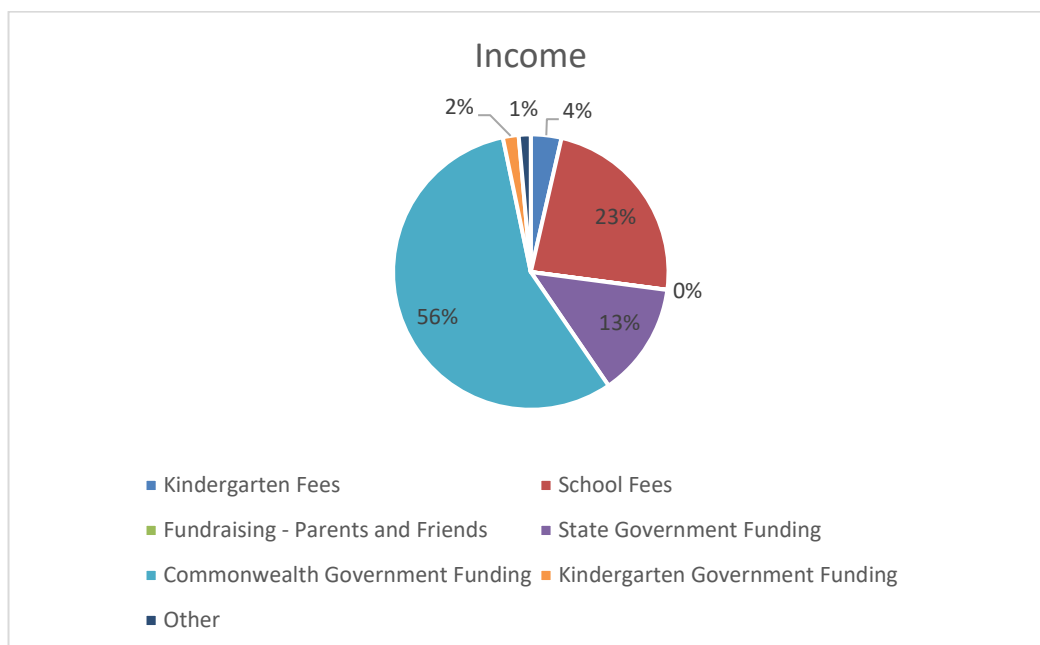
The 2022 financial audit was completed “without qualification”. The school continues to improve its forward planning capacity to minimise financial risk in an uncertain financial environment.

- Mr. Tim Bunning of Counter Pro, formerly, Prowse Perrin & Toomey has continued as the Auditor.

### *Income:*

Income Broken down by funding source:

Total Kindergarten Fees:	\$ 86,443
Total School Fees:	\$ 564,950
Donations – Parents and Friends:	\$ 315
Victorian Government Grants – Kindergarten:	\$ 44,558
Victorian Government Grants:	\$ 321,639
Federal Government Grants:	\$1,354,780
Other:	\$ 34,020
<b>TOTAL INCOME:</b>	<b>\$2,406,705</b>



## Governance

The Governance Committee is made up of representatives from the College of Teachers, the parent community and invited members for their expertise. The Business Manager is required to attend. Invited members are to bring a wider source of knowledge. The primary task of the Committee of Management is to ensure that, within legal and financial constraints, the school fulfils its mission. Decision-making is run along democratic principles, where people with equal rights discuss issues until consensus is reached.

In 2022 our Committee of Management was comprised of:

- Tony Hood. Tony is a current parent and an accountant. Tony is an invited member of the committee and was elected to be the Committee Chair.
- Louise Cheslett. Business Manager, Committee Secretary and Public Officer.
- John Goble. A representative for the College of Teachers.
- Svantje Mertens. A representative for the College of Teachers.
- Hannah Connell and Ellen Sabo were parent representatives on the committee.

The Committee of Management is constitutionally responsible for the overall governance of the school and delegates the authority of the education, policy implementation and the general conduct of school affairs to the Head of School who works with the support of the College of Teachers (for pedagogy) and the management team (for day-to-day responsibilities).

The Committee of Management is mandated to ensure fiscal policy is prudent, the infrastructure is maintained and that the strategic plan is adhered to.

Our finances directly correlate to our enrolment numbers. Below are our student enrolment numbers over the past ten years as per the census.

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Little Kinder		13	11	6	9	10	9	17	8	15	6	17	17	10
Kindergarten		17	10	12	9	16	13	15	21	13	20	12	12	14
Prep	7	8	12	10	11	11	11	17	14	16	13	23	23	10
Class One	8	6	10	11	12	10	11	12	17	16	19	14	14	15
Class Two	9	6	9	8	10	11	9	12	13	15	11	21	21	18
Class Three	7	11	4	9	8	10	11	11	11	10	14	11	11	12
Class Four	6	8	10	6	9	9	9	9	11	6	8	14	14	20
Class Five	4	7	6	9	6	7	11	10	11	11	5	9	9	7
Class Six	7	5	7	5	10	6	7	10	9	9	14	3	3	10
School Total	48	51	58	58	66	64	69	81	86	83	84	95	95	92

## NAPLAN Results

NAPLAN testing did take place in 2022, although we did not have enough students participating to show any real data. Many parents, over 50%, at Ballarat Steiner School elected to withdraw their children from the NAPLAN tests. More details can be found on the MySchool website.

## Welfare and Well-Being

Ballarat Steiner School is a non-denominational school that reflects the values of Steiner Education. We endeavour to educate the children holistically via a balanced curriculum which recognises the totality of the child's threefold nature of thinking, feeling and willing, so that as adults they will be able to contribute to society as creative, ethical and responsible citizens.

At Ballarat Steiner School, we strive to build confidence, initiative and responsibility. We actively work towards an accepting and compassionate community which is founded on a harmonious partnership between school and home. A vibrant and healthy school environment must be maintained by all members of the school community – teachers, children and parents. Our comprehensive Code of Conduct and our communication policies for both teachers and parents lay down clear guidelines for all parties, presenting direction for clear communication and effective procedures for the resolution of differences.

We have a maximum of 26 students per class, so that we can nourish each child and cater for individual differences. The children are a constant source of delight. There is a high level of care evident in the student community as children from classes one to six play happily alongside each other. A child who has been identified with additional needs is discussed at staff meetings and a student support group (SSG) may be formed to create an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for that student. Parents are encouraged to join SSG meetings and be actively involved in their child's IEP.

## Student attendance

2022 was our first full year of attendance which was exciting for all members of our community.

Students' overall attendance rate for 2022 was 85%. This is down on average due to students being encouraged to remain at home with cold like symptoms.

One aspect of our school philosophy is to promote attitudes and habits that are responsible and thoughtful. Punctuality is one such habit. Lateness in arriving at school or school activities means a poor start to the day for the child and disrupts the class, teacher and lesson. We seek the support of all parents in ensuring that their child arrives at school in time for the bell. Absenteeism is limited to the usual patterns of childhood illness or to special circumstances which are discussed with parents. The teachers' committed and generous participation in school life is a model for the students' behaviour, as they too have relatively few days of absence.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Semester one	92%	85%	91%	90%	90%	85%	86%
Semester two	89%	89%	93%	88%	90%	84%	84%
Yearly Average	90.5%	87%	92%	89%	90%	84.5%	85%

## Community

Our parent body is supportive in many ways, and we value their contribution greatly. We recognise that each day there are many parental contributions which enrich the lives of our students and this ranges from practical assistance with reading or a project, to the sharing of knowledge or skills. A community is a living and growing organism that requires ongoing sustenance, and we engage in this via our festivals and community events. This photo is from a tree planting day that we held during the year. The school also holds termly working bees for the kindergarten, prep and the whole school. Parent information sessions and class meetings address the



children's development and foster dialogue about education and the challenges of parenting.

The celebration of seasonal festivals offers another opportunity for community sharing. The school gathers each Monday morning to begin the week with singing and sharing. Parents are always encouraged to attend. The children are involved in wider community events such as Remembrance Day and Anzac Day with the local RSL Group.



### *Post school destination*

In 2022, our school was in its twenty second year. We have alumni who are undertaking a diverse range of degrees from universities across the country ranging from medicine, accounting, nursing, environmental, marine



biology, building and construction and business. We also have alumni that have moved into trade apprenticeships.

Transition to local secondary schools has been very successful with most students who left in 2022 going to a selected entry program at a local high school. Others attended local state and independent schools. We have received feedback that they are all settling in well.

*“A healthy social life is found only, when in the mirror of each soul the whole community finds its reflection, and when in the whole community the virtue of each one is living.” Rudolf Steiner*

Parents are regularly reminded of the School Communication Policy and are invited to provide input and ideas on aspects of the school operations. Annual teacher appraisals indicate that staff are satisfied with the match of duties, responsibilities and working conditions that they are working under.